A Bizarre Suggestion — Athar Mansoor

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A Bizarre Suggestion

Athar Mansoor

With the US presidential election 2020 just a few weeks away, President Donald Trump has come up with one of the strangest suggestions – delay the election. This idea has been dismissed by several Republicans including Senate majority leader, Mitch McConnell, and House of Representatives minority leader, Kevin McCarthy, who remarked, "Never in the history of the federal elections have we ever not held an election and we should go forward with our election." Some have even labelled this suggestion as a "serious and chilling attack on the democratic process." Constitutionally, a delay can only be approved by the Congress which, at present, is partially controlled by the Democrats – the US President does not possess authority to postpone the election.

Trump's far-out idea comes in the wake of the American states' desire to make postal voting easier due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated public health concerns. A record number of Americans are expected to participate in November vote through mail-in voting to avoid the risk of getting infected with coronavirus and aggravating the already gloomy situation. Without any solid or reasonable evidence, Trump has shown his concern that the postal or universal mail-in voting will make the upcoming election "the most inaccurate and fraudulent" election in the country's history and, therefore, "a great embarrassment to the USA." Undeniably a conjectural statement and a highly misleading claim on his part about the reliability of the mail balloting.

Trump wants to delay the voting till the people of the United States feel safe and secure to cast their ballot. If asked when will that situation occur, he may not be able to give an answer himself, given the current Covid-19 infection and fatality rates in the US and his administration's extremely poor show on controlling the spread of the disease in America. At the end of the first week of August 2020, more than 5 million in the US were infected by coronavirus and almost 165,000 had died. These numbers are way ahead of Brazil; the second position holder on the table with 2.9 million infections and 99,000 deaths.

As bizarre as it may seem, this queer suggestion by Mr Trump is a clear signal of his lack of confidence, in the not-so-far-away battle for the White House, against Joe Biden. A glance over the national polls makes things quite clear and Mr Trump's nervousness can be understood by the predictions on who is expected to occupy one of the most powerful public offices in the world. The state-by-state polling data of 8th August shows 308 Electoral College votes out of a total of 538 for Joe Biden and only 113 for Donald Trump with only nine toss-up states having the rest of the 117 votes. In the toss-up states, the difference between the two rivals is

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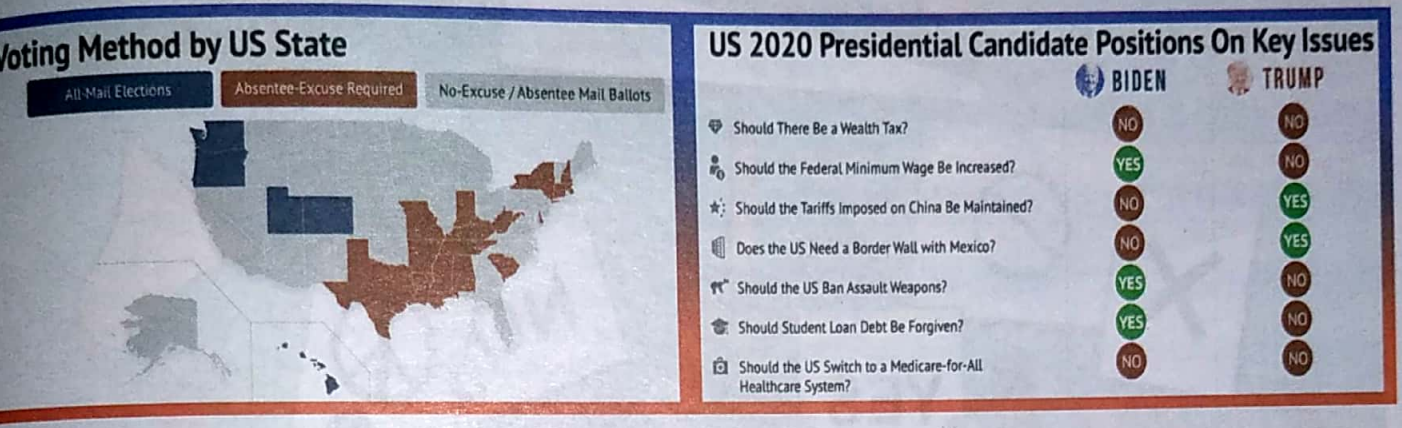
less than five percentage points. Even if all of these states tilt in favour of Trump, he may not win the election. A clear lead by Biden who requires 270 Electoral College votes to win the elections seems to have made Trump shaky and recommend a postponement of the elections.

It is not only a dismal performance against the pandemic that has increased Trump's fear of losing if the elections are held on time, the release of the second quarter's economic data has also added to his woes. He had been relying on the financial turnaround theme to strengthen his campaign for re-election. However, the economic indicators of the second quarter, published recently, portray a dark picture, shattering his confidence further.

The Financial Times has reported the sharpest postwar contraction of the US economy in the second quarter. The GDP fell by a historic 32.9% on an annualized basis. Although this figure is slightly better than the expected number of 34.7%, no other shock such as the Great Depression or the Great Recession over the last two centuries has had such a huge impact on the US economy. The closest previous drop was in 1921.

While commenting on the state of the US economy, Mark Zandi, the Chief Economist at Moody's Analytics remarked, "It's a very deep and dark hole and we're coming out of it, but it's going to take a long time to get out." Since the outbreak of Covid-19 in the US, there have been sharp declines in consumption, exports, investments and spending by the state and local governments. Spending in healthcare, clothing and footwear have nosedived along with sharp drops in inventory investments by motor vehicle dealers and big reductions in new family housing investments. All of these have combined to pull down the GDP substantially. Besides this, an unemployment rate of 14.7%,—a post-Depression high—has worsened the situation. The number of Americans filing new claims for unemployment benefits in the third week of July was 1.434 million.

President Trump seems to be stuck in a deep quagmire and his frustration is evident. It would not be unrealistic to expect more desperate moves from him in the days to come and as the election gets closer.



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Can the US President cancel or postpone an election with an executive order?

No, because Article II of the US Constitution empowers Congress to choose the timing of the general election. An 1845 federal law fixed the date as the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. It would take a change in federal law to move that date. That would mean legislation enacted by Congress, signed by the president and subject to challenge in the courts. It means that the House of Representatives, which is controlled by Democrats; the Senate, which is controlled by Republicans; and President Trump would all have to approve such legislation. Although calling that unlikely would be an understatement, even if all of that happened, there would not be much flexibility in choosing an alternate election date: The Constitution mandates that the new Congress must be sworn in on Jan. 3, and that the new president's term must begin on Jan. 20. Those dates cannot be changed just by the passage of normal legislation.

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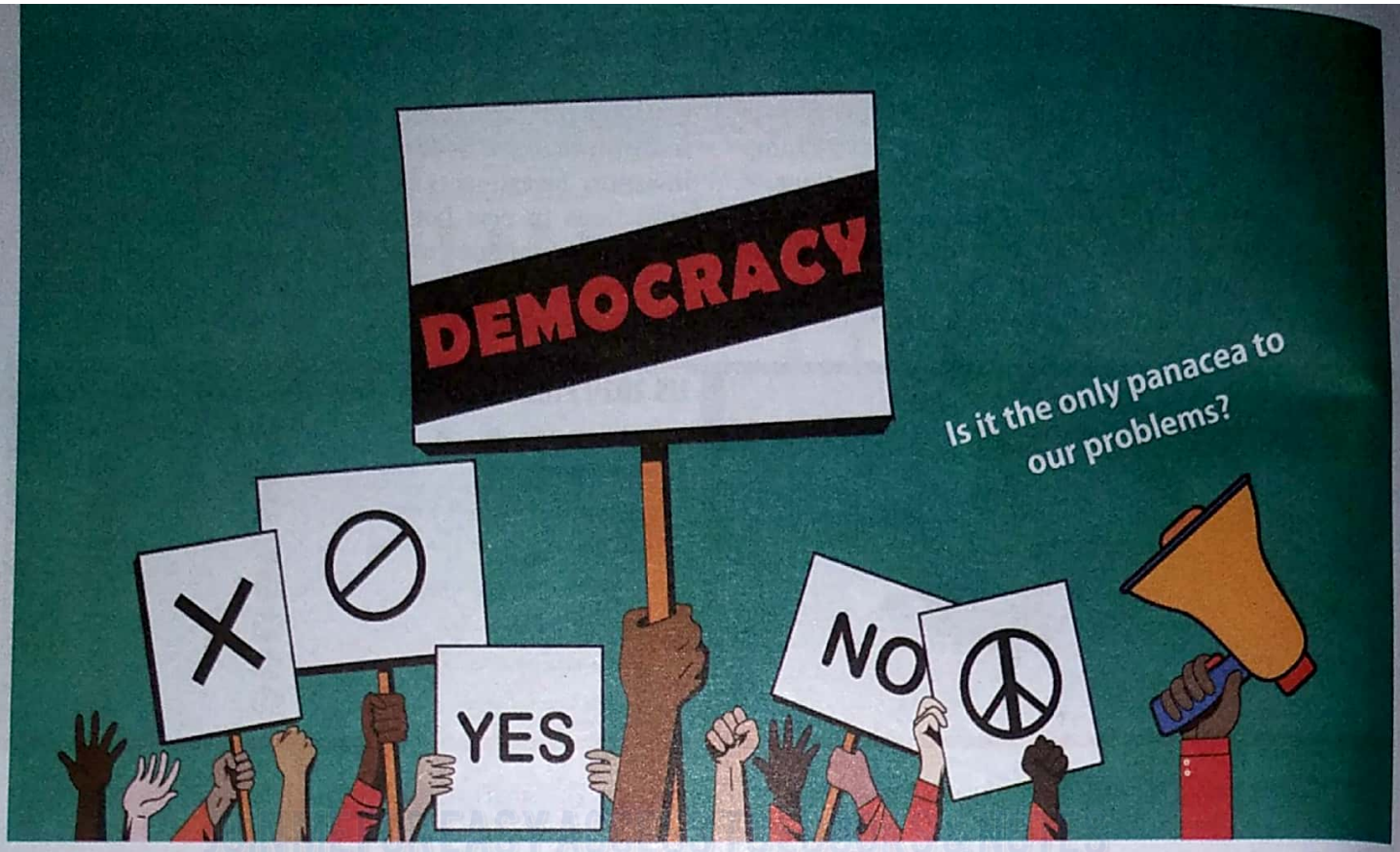

Dr Munawar Sabir

Although the evolution of the democratic process started with Magna Carta in the United Kingdom, credit goes to Declaration of Independence of USA, 1776. However, still, French Revolution of 1789 is considered synonymous to base and basics of democracy. It is believed that this revolution jolted all the Europe with an enormously impactful wave of democracy. It gave the world a lesson of democracy like a belief, based on the slogan of *liberté, égalité, fraternité* (liberty, equality and fraternity). It still is almost a divine definition of democracy.

After World War II, second wave of democracy swept over the world in the form of decolonization, mainly in the less-developed and developing countries of the world. But, at the same time, a strong global wave of communism, which started soon after World War I, posed a serious threat to Western-style democracy, as many communist revolutions toppled kings which resulted in the establishment of single-party based, dictatorial governments. The phenomenal economic growth and development of former USSR (now Russia) emerged as antithesis to Western philosophy of democracy as the only panacea. Same threat is faced by the West from China as the potential next world superpower.

Anyway, after the end of Cold War and the demise of USSR, the idea of social democracy, instead of capitalist democracy, also looked appealing to the world. As a result of this, many capitalist countries introduced social security reforms, and welfare states emerged in many European countries. But, the Middle

A simple but important reality is that creation of cities is called civilization. In this regard, Mesopotamia (in today's Iraq) is believed to be the first-ever civilization, established around 6000 years ago. It is pertinent to understand that city and formal politics are twins. All ancient cities/civilizations were mercantile in nature, and needed some basic laws as well as protection from invaders. For these two purposes, the phenomenon of 'government' appeared. Hence, politics started in the shape of city states. Kings, mostly monarchs, continued to rule various parts of the world, also called empires, uptil the mid-18th century, when Industrial Revolution took place in the heart of Europe.

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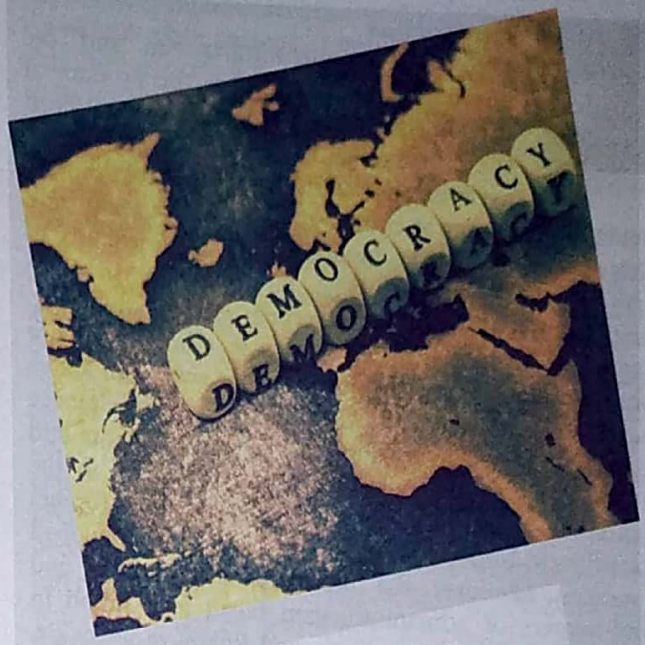
East is still the world's only major region that is yet to see any form or degree of democracy, as Middle Eastern countries are ruled by monarchs. The region enjoys the fruits of geological lottery of black gold, commonly called oil. In this region, due to the economic opulence, people have all possible facilities at a dirt cheap cost. So, due to this economic prosperity, even a revolutionary wave is not visible, let alone any major revolution, in the foreseeable future. Another strong reason behind this state of affairs is the theocratic-style of laws, which keep people far away even from thinking of having a democratic movement.

On the other hand, many developing countries, including Pakistan, have faced, and are still facing, military regimes. Similarly, in many such countries, families are ruling and this makes these states, 'democratic dynasties'. In case of India, the world's so-called second largest democracy, the first prime minister of the country was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, who remained in office for almost 17 years—obviously, an undemocratic thing. It is also pertinent to mention that Nehru's government ended because of his death; otherwise, he could have continued to occupy this high office. More so, the next prime minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri, was allegedly poisoned while he was on an official visit to USSR. After Shastri's death, Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, became the prime minister of India. When she was killed in 1984, her son Rajiv Gandhi rose to hold this prestigious office. In total, this family has ruled India for over 36 years and still Rajiv Gandhi's son, Rahul Gandhi, is no less than a holy figure for Congress workers in the politics of India. Although India claims to be a secular state, for over 52 years this state has been ruled by Brahmans (elitist caste in Hindu religion) and no Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, has been the prime minister of India. That is why India is called Brahman-Hindu secular state.

Next aspect of democracy in current era is challenged by the dominating global position enjoyed by China. China has actually neutralized the concept and broken the myth of democracy as the only system to progress and develop as a country. It is seriously difficult for the Western countries to justify the dominance of China as the world's second largest economy—likely to be at number one by 2024—even being a single-party-based communist country. Point to be considered here is that the current president of China, Xi Jinping has become president for life.

At the very same time, China proves that eradication of corruption and promotion of education and research are its top priorities. But, the Chinese are not chanting the mantra of democracy as the only way to become a prosperous country. Especially, India and Pakistan need to learn and follow this lesson.



INTERNATIONAL
DAY OF DEMOCRACY
15 September

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Tehmina Habib

Introduction

The rise of humanitarianism and the international community is the product of the long-festering Cold War. In the 1990s, the global political landscape was overwhelmed with the idea that human beings matter more as compared to state sovereignty and this notion became the foundation of 'Responsibility to Protect' (R2P) doctrine. The R2P aims to promote international action against crime against humanity, genocide, ethnic cleansing and war crimes. Its core philosophy encompasses the idea that sovereign states have the responsibility to protect people from violence leading to genocide, infringement of human rights and mass atrocities beyond the borders, anywhere in the world. The twenty-first century witnessed a rise in foreign meddling in domestic affairs of weak and underdeveloped countries. Moreover, the international community and flag-bearers of humanitarianism failed to respond in cases of Kashmir, Libya, Syria and Rohingya genocide, which puts a question mark on the aims of R2P, and exposes the hidden paradox that has generated a heated debate on the use of controversial R2P doctrine.

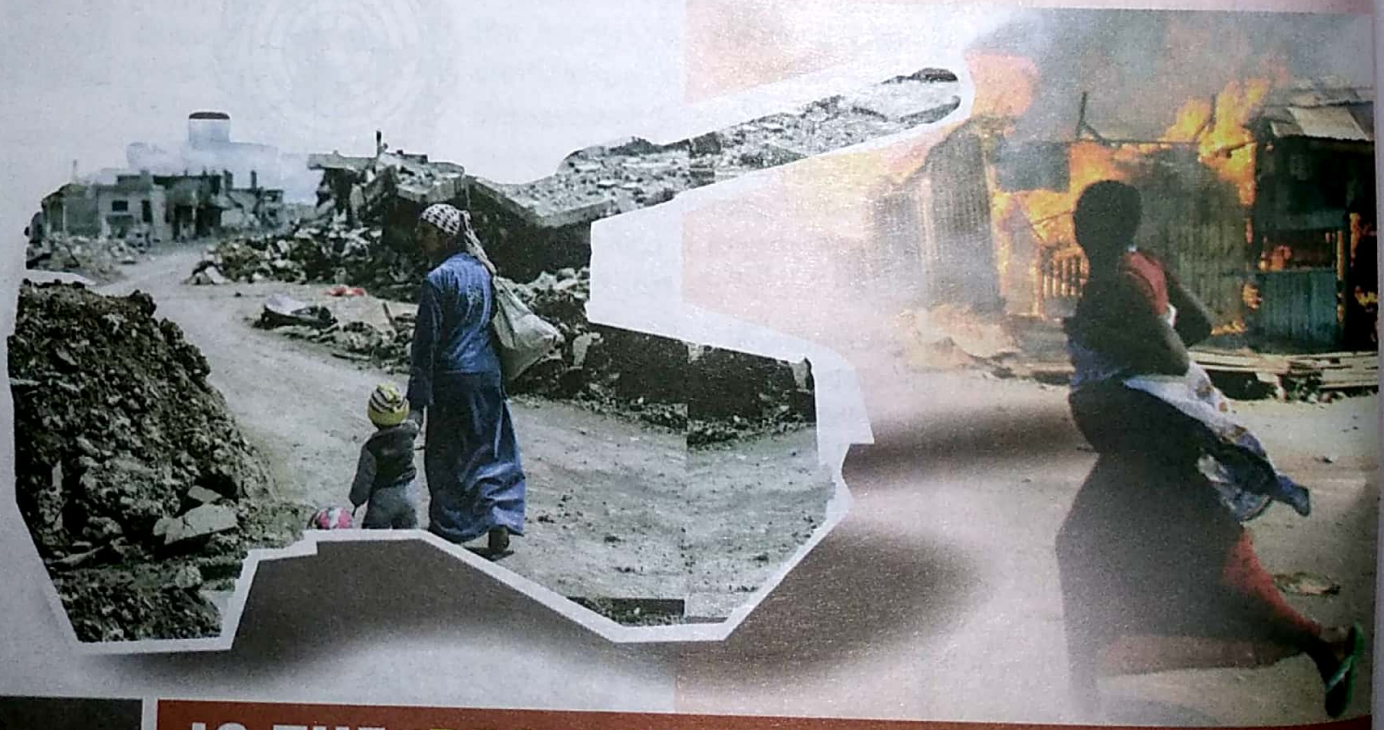
This article will focus on the relevance and credibility of the R2P doctrine since its adoption.

What is R2P Doctrine?

The high-level UN World Summit of 2005 marked the beginning of the R2P doctrine as a product of the post-Cold War era while challenging the ideas of state sovereignty, independence and humanitarianism after the end of the Cold War. The idea was born after the failure of international community in playing a role in Rwanda and Yugoslavia during the 1990s. In 1999, Kofi Annan, the then-Secretary-General of the United Nations, highlighted this failure in the wake of the Rwandan genocide of 1994, and Srebrenica massacre of 1995, and requested to redraw the traditional concept of sovereignty. Mr Annan asked the UN member states if the international community would follow the conventional notion of sovereignty, how it would fight against incidents like Rwanda and Srebrenica. In response, the Canadian government formulated the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS). In 2001, ICISS released a report entitled "The Responsibility to Protect" which clearly defines the parameters when one state can interfere in the sovereignty of another. It entailed the philosophy that if a state failed to protect its people against human rights violation, or indulged in such violations or genocide, the responsibility to safeguard them will be transferred to the international community. During World Summit 2005, the majority of world leaders showed consensus and adopted the doctrine.

The R2P doctrine has three main pillars:

1. Every sovereign state is responsible for protecting its



IS THE 'RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT' DOCTRINE STILL RELEVANT?

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people against genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.
2. The international community is responsible for encouraging, holding accountable and supporting the state in fulfilling its duty.
3. If the state failed to establish its writ, the responsibility to protect would shift to the international community.

The United Nations has put utmost efforts to portray R2P as a connecting point between state and individual security. Critics of UN's role in the adoption of doctrine, argue that military intervention has been taken as a sole part of R2P, which questions its moral legitimacy and 'apolitical' character.

Epistemological Debate on R2P

The proponents of R2P support this doctrine on the premise of the importance of humanity beyond state sovereignty and territorial integrity. According to them, when a sovereign state fails to protect its civilians, it loses legitimacy to rule over the territory. The UN resolution to intervene in Libya orchestrated international consensus on the use of R2P against any state. Advocates of R2P claim that the doctrine has gained consensus over time, showing upward trajectory and legitimacy in the international community; however, the reality is otherwise.

Besides this school of thought, a number of members of epistemic community are sceptical and show their reservations against the conceptualization and implementation of R2P. The epistemic community related to R2P includes academia working on violence prevention and intervention, policymakers, international organizations practicing humanitarianism and the media. Among the critics, social scientists with the post-colonial approach take a firm position against R2P and consider it a form of neo-imperialism, which has been created to justify interventionist actions in contemporary world politics. It establishes, they argue, the same power politics, unequal international system and license to interfere in the domestic affairs of other states. Some social scientists call these humanitarian interventions as neo-imperialistic tools to impose their hegemony over other countries.

History of the world is replete with the examples of intervention by rich countries in weaker countries on different pretexts, ranging from intervention of Britain in the Indian Subcontinent through East India Company to intervention in Australia as saviours of mankind. They count humanitarianism as an added feature of neo-imperialism in contemporary world politics and argue that 'the politics of compassion is the politics of inequality and politics of domination'.

The pacifist advocates criticize R2P on the grounds that it allows use of force and violence in pursuit of humanitarianism and it has initiated a new era of militarism, instead of promoting global peace. The pluralists criticize R2P on the premise of its implications as, according to them, the frequent use of R2P will shift its nature from discretionary norm to an obligatory norm with a stratified form of sovereignty, giving hegemonic privilege to western powers.

R2P vis-à-vis Law & Morality

The R2P is a product of an affair between morality and realpolitik, without legal backing. In cases where the law is absent, morality takes over. Furthermore, the interplay of morality and power manifests "might is right" that is why the US always finds a solution to achieve its stalemate objectives. This fact that the permanent members of the UNSC have the authority to implement R2P against any country for strategic and political reasons is a dangerous premise. The basis of this doctrine is morality which can become a tool in the hands of power abusers, and the intervening states are not answerable to anyone as their morality cannot be questioned. It serves the real-world balance of power instead of translating its true meaning.

The R2P is aligned neither with the concept of realpolitik nor with the fundamental principles of the UN, which inherently recognize the sovereignty of all member states. There is a dichotomy in the exercise of R2P by UNSC; wherein Libya's case, it was applicable, whereas, in the Syrian situation, it didn't make due to disagreement by one of the permanent members. It reveals that the national interest of permanent members is supreme and is beyond R2P and humanitarianism. Morality is a fluid concept and applied according to the interests of influential parties. R2P is an inspiration depending on the will and discretion of sovereign state members of the UNSC. In theory, it is a significant concept for the peaceful world; in practice, it is, however, riddled with too many

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contradictions in its application and interpretation.

Implementation of R2P

i. Libya

After the adoption of this doctrine, intervention in Libya was the first step taken by the UNSC. The civil unrest in Libya provided an opportunity to translate the promise of R2P into action. That was the first time in UN history when its Security Council authorized the launch of military operations without the consent of the Libyan government. NATO implemented the decision and overthrew the authoritarian regime in Libya for the reinstatement of fundamental and democratic rights of the people. The intervention in Libya is a successful invocation of R2P, although there was no humanitarian crisis or fear of genocide.

However, this intervention, unfortunately, could not produce good results for the Libyans. NATO forces aimed to topple the Gaddafi regime, and for that, civilian areas were massively bombarded, resulting in enormous casualties. These casualties created uproar around the world and questioned the purpose and vitality of intervention in Libya. Many social scientists and conflict experts label Libyan intervention as a failed attempt due to massive innocent civil casualties and the ensuing crisis of lawlessness, with several militias fighting against each other. Moreover, the support of NATO to rebels to overthrow the government is against the fundamental principles of the United Nations. Most importantly, the ICISS report says that while taking action under R2P, it is the responsibility to rebuild the state and provide every support to address all losses. But this aspect was blatantly ignored.

ii. Crimea

Being a staunch supporter of state sovereignty, Russia predominantly has a negative outlook towards the application of R2P doctrine. Even it condemned the use of force against Libya and Syria. Russia has always discouraged the role of extra-regional actors in a country due to the Soviet experience. However, the crisis in Crimea—the South of Ukraine—saw a U-turn in Russia's stance over R2P. It shows that countries tailor their standards of morality and translation of R2P according to their own national interests. Russia claimed that extremist groups of Crimea were a threat to Russian citizens there. Further, Russia neither sought authorization from UNSC nor did it prove the seriousness of crisis threatening the population at large. Hence, Russia contradicted its traditional stance on R2P and launched military action in Crimea. This action was taken on the pretext of the protection of Russian people trapped in Crimea. Syria qualifies the criteria to implement R2P but Russia vetoed intervention in Syria and used the same argument while waging military intervention in Crimea exposes power politics in UNSC member countries over weak countries.

iii. Syria

The Syrian conflict is a harsh example where, in spite of the failure of the sovereign state in protecting civilians from massive atrocities, the international community failed to invoke R2P, and could not fulfil its humanitarian responsibility. Syria is burning for almost a decade; the Syrian government under the rule of Bashar al-Assad killed its own civilians in the name of war against rebels. This situation provides a threshold for the international community to invoke R2P against mass atrocities on Syrian civilians, but it was unable to get authorization from UNSC. The major reason behind the failure of the international community is the contradiction between the protection of people and regime change as having done in Libya's case. The Libya episode highlights the fine line between regime change and humanitarian action to protect civilians. Due to the Libyan case, the members got confused and were reluctant to use R2P in the case of Syria. Thereby, Russia and China stood against the R2P to the extent that Russia used veto for the first time.

The proponents of R2P claim that Russia's economic and strategic interests in the region—arms deals and the Russian naval facility at a Syrian port, and Russia's collusion with the Assad regime are the factors behind the veto against intervention in Syria. Hence, the argument that UNSC decisions are political in nature and its members keep their interest supreme while making decisions, took strength, putting a question mark against the humanitarian character of the UN. Both countries, China and Russia, were not concerned about the destruction and massive killings in Syria. Their foremost interest was in extending their own economic, strategic and political motives.

iv. Yemen

In 2015, Saudi Arabia decided to intervene in Yemen on the pretext of R2P. However, a formal resolution was never moved to seek the support of the UN. Riyadh just

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announced that it is launching a military operation in Yemen as a fulfilment of responsibility to protect Yemeni civilians and support the Yemeni government against terrorism of Houthi rebels. Saudi-led coalition was criticized a lot due to airstrikes on the civilian population, which resulted in 4,000 civilian casualties. The Western powers like the US, UK, and France also supported the Saudi-led coalition's decision. In a nutshell, it may be conceptualized in a way that R2P, in most cases, is used to protect the state's own national and geopolitical interests. The humanitarian ground becomes a secondary issue.

v. Kashmir

With reference of atrocities and genocide in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIJOK), the lack of applicability of R2P displays its moral corrosion within the international community. The Kashmiris in IIJOK are facing gross human rights violations by the Indian armed forces. India is applying systematic use of torture, pellet guns against civilians, and rape as a weapon of war. The Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Kashmir by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights also confirms human rights violations on a massive scale, including lack of access to justice, administrative detention, excessive use of force, arbitrary arrests and detention, enforced disappearances, restrictions on the right to freedom of expression, reprisals against human rights defenders and journalists, and sexual violence.

Kashmir provides the field to global political governance to exercise R2P and humanitarian intervention. However, unfortunately, the major powers of the world have continued hushing over the issue as their strategic interests are not involved. The United States' strategic interests converge with India which it considers the lynchpin of its Indo-Pacific strategy. Russia has always emphasized India and Pakistan to find a solution bilaterally, which displays its indifferent approach towards Kashmir Issue. China is the only UNSC permanent member that is playing an active role and has facilitated UNSC meetings to resolve this crisis because the stable South Asian region is in the best interest of China.

Conclusion

Concluding the debate about the relevance and credibility of the doctrine of responsibility to protect, it would be appropriate to say that the creation of the R2P has introduced a significant promotion to the humanitarian cause. No one can deny the importance of such humanitarian intervention for a peaceful world, but the devil is in the details. The principles of the R2P doctrine are significant, but its application and interpretation have raised questions. Since its adoption, it has been observed that every case where R2P is invoked, somehow involves power politics. The problem lies in the normative nature of international law under which this doctrine works and its design is prone to misapplication. The implementation of R2P should be backed by law instead of morality as 'moral standards' is a fluid concept and changes with the situation. The R2P doctrine should be considered a progressive policy that the international community unanimously proceeds to critique, improve and ultimately get desired results. The strategic use of the R2P framework to justify certain diplomatic or military interventions underscores the pitfalls of vague principles in international politics. The R2P doctrine is still in its infancy, but it has the potential to evolve and fill the vacuum in the bifocal orthodoxy of customary international law.

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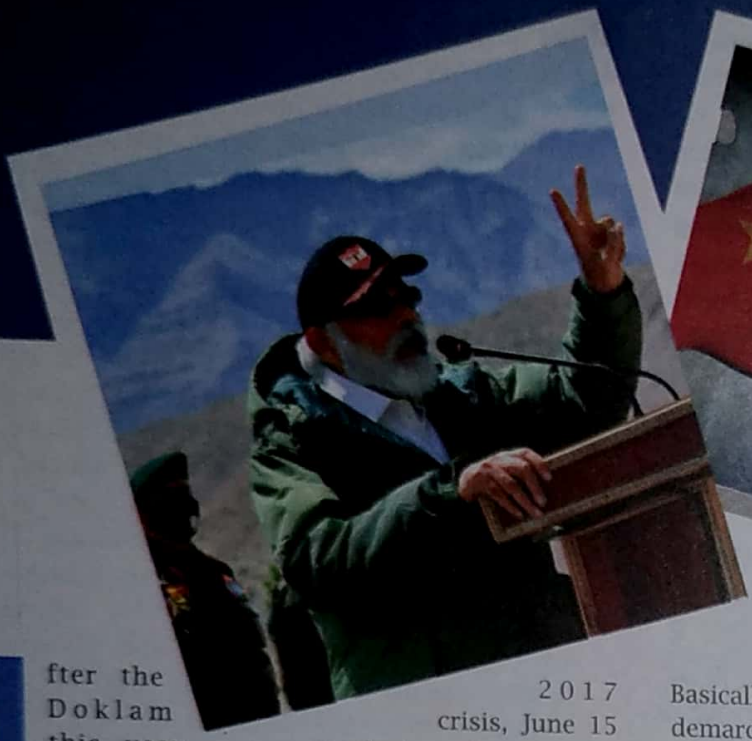
TERRITORIAL CLAIMS — AND COUNTERCLAIMS — OVER LADAKH



Dr Basharet Shah

After the 2017 Doklam crisis, June 15 this year marked another standoff between China and India owing to prior tense border clashes. The decades-old border conflict between the two countries on their territorial claims and counterclaims turned into an acute crisis which left 20 Indian soldiers dead. Forces of both countries were engaged in intense physical altercations involving scuffles and stone-pelting. However, things calmed down after flag meetings between Chinese and Indian senior military officials. Both countries' troops have patrolled this region for decades, as the contested 2,200-mile border is a long-standing subject of competing claims and tensions, including a brief war in 1962. The clashes broke out after both sides quibbled over new infrastructure building on Indian sides of the disputed border. One of the key Indian projects there is the construction of the Darbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldi Road in Ladakh, cutting through treacherous mountain ridges as high as 16,000 feet. The road serves as a strategic asset to India as it runs almost parallel to the disputed border with China-claimed Aksai Chin and reaches Daulat Beg Oldi, an Indian military base and landing ground for the Indian Air Force, about 12 miles from Karakoram Pass, which separates Ladakh from Xinjiang. The current tensions have jeopardized the 'Border Peace and Tranquillity Agreement' which both the parties had signed in 1993.

Basically, the border, or Line of Actual Control (LAC), is not demarcated, and China and India have differing ideas of where it is, leading to intermittent border skirmishes that often usually don't escalate - serious border standoffs like the current one are less frequent, though this is the fourth since 2013. In the last decade alone, three such episodes - at Depsang in northern Ladakh in 2013, at Chumar in eastern Ladakh in 2014, and at Doklam on the Sino-Indian-Bhutanese border in 2017 - produced local crises severe enough to require higher political intervention for their defusing. There are plenty of other motivations guiding Beijing's befitting response to Indian violation and aggression along the LAC.

The fundamental reason behind the recent tensions was a change in the status quo at the disputed border on the part of India by either entrenching a new physical presence or creating new physical infrastructure in the disputed areas, which is, obviously, unacceptable to mighty China.

Secondly, the US-China relationship is at its lowest ebb right now while that between the United States and India is flourishing on strategic levels. Beijing knows that Washington considers New Delhi a strategic partner in its effort to contain China through the Trump administration's Indo-Pacific strategy. In this regard, the befitting response to Indian provocation at the border serves as a deterrent to Indo-US collusion.

Thirdly, China was aware diplomatically of India's August 2019 actions to end Jammu and Kashmir's traditional autonomy, one result of which was the creation of the Union

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Territory of Ladakh; China saw India's recent road construction work as an endeavour to change the status quo and a challenge to its strategic position. Above all, the border violations by Indian forces finally compelled China to respond with physical force as both countries had agreed to not use explosives within two kilometres of the LAC.

China's Belt and Road Initiative is yet another powerful accelerant of its rivalry with India, and it has really taken off in the Modi years. A strongly worded statement issued by the Indian External Affairs ministry against the BRI back in 2017 that India rejects the project because of its intention to expand into disputed territory that New Delhi claims as its own. These prior circumstances jaundiced China's view about India.

Moreover, China has started to pursue a muscular foreign policy under President Xi Jinping to show the people of China that the CPC, which is going to complete a century of its establishment next year, is indispensable to China's bright future. Xi is having a strong stringent move against Indian provocations at disputed borders because he is the chairman of the CPC, commander-in-chief of their PLA and the president of China. Xi Jinping wants to make a mark on the Chinese people that how strong China as a nation is (under him).

If the current situation is analyzed, India's refusal to back down in the face of Doklam crisis made Beijing realise that India is willing to stand up to its powerful neighbour. However, this standoff did not prompt China to back off in the face of Indian provocations in the future.

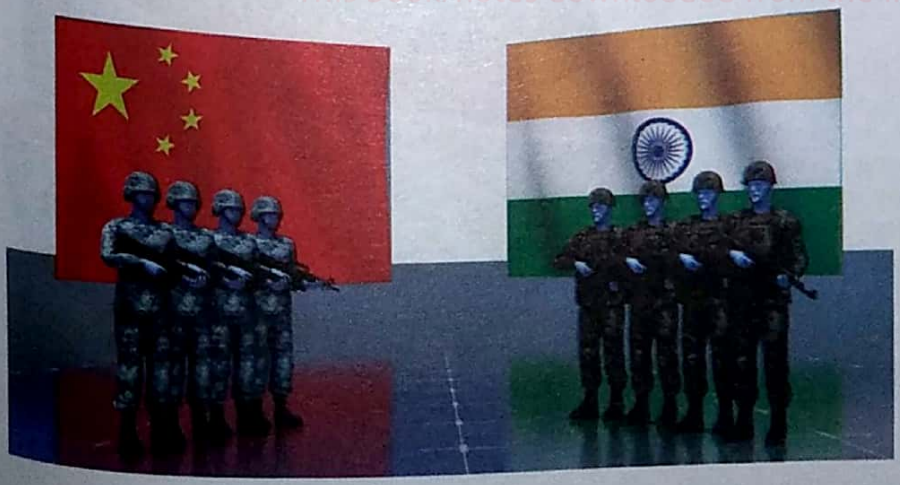
Instead, this arguably compelled China to dig in deeper and deter India in any aggressive endeavours like the one it did with Pakistan in the case of Jammu and Kashmir in year 2019. The display of Chinese cautious prudence against India is what we've seen in Ladakh in recent weeks.

At diplomatic level, Ladakh crisis required both countries to mutually tackle the problem at hand without any foreign interference. India has sanely rejected any direct involvement offered by the US immediately after the altercation. As a matter of fact, India has adopted a moderate diplomatic response since China is asserting its muscular strength based on conventional and nuclear edge over India . Besides, India has huge Chinese investments at home at the moment, therefore, the economic interests of India are also at stake. Modi government's diplomatic handling of China has generally been consistent with past practice, and similar to Beijing's own strategy: Pursue workable diplomatic ties, and maintain an important economic partnership.

China views India as an inferior power, but treats it carefully and when possible cordially since the strategic Indo-US partnership makes China cautious of their combined rivalry against its peaceful rise. This helps explain why China over the last few years has continued to pursue economic cooperation with India, and why it has sought to promote a relatively cordial diplomatic relationship with New Delhi. The Doklam crisis is the milestone event that has shifted Chinese thinking about India. Lately, both countries are at loggerheads at borders refusing to give up on their territorial claims.

Reviewing the current circumstances, it is observed that the India-China relationship has entered into a more tense and confrontational phase, and that is likely to remain the new normal for quite some time. How Modi, and future Indian leaders, navigate that new reality as they pursue diplomatic relations with Beijing will be something that Indian foreign policy specialists will be mulling over well into the future. An important question that emerges from the events of June 15 is how India's diplomatic handling of China will change in the long term, including post-Modi. The future of India-China relations depends on what future strategy both these countries adopt post standoff. If India gives up its claims on China-controlled territory and vice versa , the two sides could negotiate new border agreements and operating procedures. But if both nations hold on to what they have gained, China would be even more assertive towards India while India would most certainly shift more overtly toward Washington.

Now If the Indo-US partnership gains strength against China, the triangular strategic hostility would serve against Pakistan as there would definitely be multiple implications for Pakistan out of this extended rivalry. Given China's deep footprint in the country through China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, there's certainly a possibility that India could covertly engage in retaliatory actions against Beijing there—such as by sponsoring attacks on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor targets, or on other Chinese interests in Pakistan. Similarly, India having disputed relations with China would also serve damage to Pakistan—strategic ally of China. The recent brutal terrorist attack on Pakistan Stock Exchange in Karachi is a testimony to the fact.



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It was 19th of December 2019 when a 55-year-old individual from Wuhan city in China tested positive for a new type of flu. Initially, people considered and dealt with it like normal flu but the havoc that it would play with everyone's life in the year 2020 was beyond everyone's imagination. The coronavirus disease, or Covid-19, branded the year 2020 as the year of pandemic. It has just turned the world upside down. Within days, the virus had spread from its point of origin to across the globe. Governments all over the world announced lockdowns. Major cities, businesses, schools, gyms and restaurants were shut down in a matter of days. International flights were banned so as to control the spread of polyhedron of Covid-19. The unimaginable had happened; the world had come to a screeching halt. So much so that people started discussing the reversal of global warming since the injection of pollutants in the environment had fallen drastically. In short, the world was left clueless as to what could be done to stop the damage.

Will CORONAVIRUS bring an end to Globalization?

Haroon Gulzar

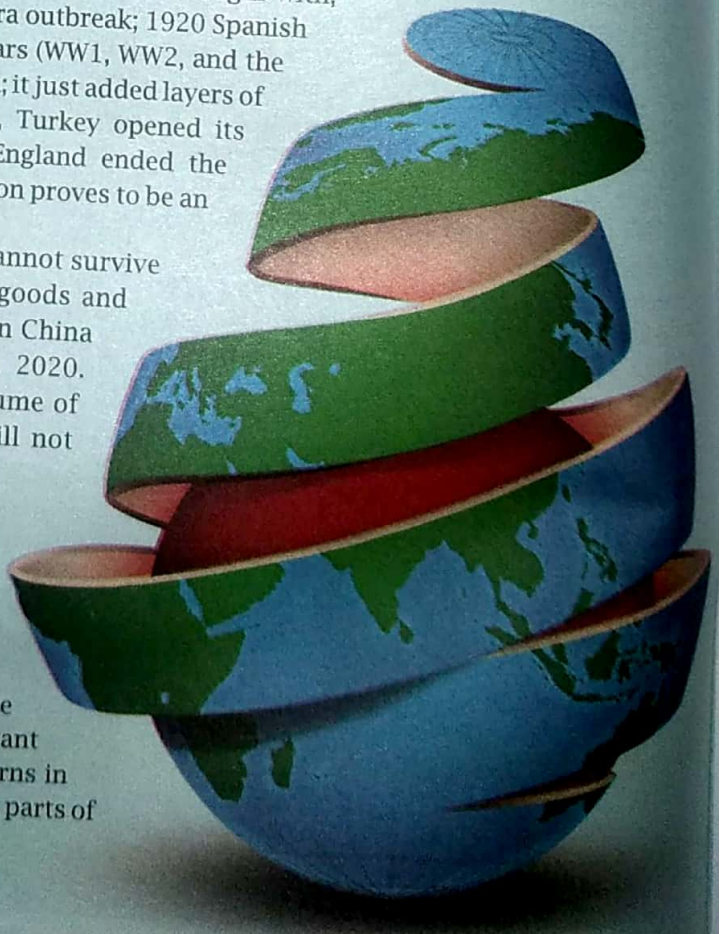
First and foremost, let's understand here what is globalization; Globalization is the mutual dependence of the world's economies, cultures and populations, brought about by cross-border trade in goods, technology, flows of investment, people and information. It is not a recent phenomenon; it is as old as the human civilization. But, yes, the speed, type and the extent of globalization has evolved with human evolution.

In this difficult time, some analysts wrongly assumed that coronavirus will bring an end to globalization. Their line of reasoning was based on two logics. First, this pandemic will increase conflict between the United States and China that will accelerate de-globalization. Second, the world of trade will change forever as supply chains will become longer, and more complex. However, time proved that both were just a myth.

Why do I say these assumptions were wrong? Why an end to globalization is a myth? In today's world, national interests are so diverse that no country can exist in a bubble, they have to interact with the world in order to survive. The world is socially, religiously, politically and economically interdependent. This argument can be justified in the light of historical and current pieces of evidence. To begin with, globalization survived despite 1720 plague; 1820 cholera outbreak; 1920 Spanish flu. Globalization also pushed forward despite three wars (WW1, WW2, and the Cold War). Even the 9/11 attack did not end globalization; it just added layers of screening. For the latter, along with many countries, Turkey opened its borders, Pakistan opened international flights, and England ended the lockdown just after five months of outbreak. Globalization proves to be an unending process.

The world has become a global village and countries cannot survive without interacting with each other. Countries need goods and services from one another. For example, trade between China and Russia is projected to rise to $200 billion in 2020. Similarly, China and the USA have a mutual trade volume of $654 billion. So, the interdependence of countries will not bring an end to globalization.

Personal interconnections between different parts of the world formed over the past several decades of globalization cannot be easily broken. People have friends and families living abroad. In some cases, the whole family migrates to a foreign country while leaving all relatives back in the home country. They keep visiting their relatives on special occasions (on marriage ceremonies, death occasions, and such other important events). In other cases, many people have business concerns in different parts of the world and they are settled in different parts of the world. Can you imagine breaking of this bond? NEVER!



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The advances in communication methods especially the Internet are faster and more efficient than ever, they remain unaffected by the coronavirus outbreak. People are using the Internet more than ever during the pandemic. Similarly, the pandemic is driving huge growth in remote freelance work. People are earning online. Offices are only physically controlled, but in actual everybody is doing work from home. Major businesses and educational institutes of the world are being controlled through the Internet. Students are studying and taking exams online.

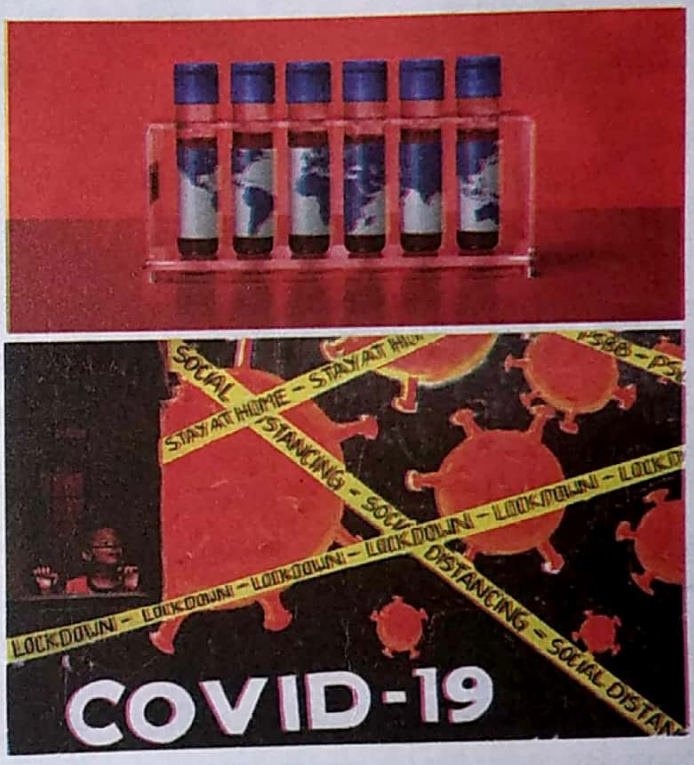
Global religious interdependency will also not bring the end to globalization. Why? The answer lies in these case examples. First, consider for example, Christianity which is the world's largest religion having 2.4 billion followers (approximately 29 percent of the total population). The holy places of Christians are located in different countries. So, stopping them to visit their holy places is not an option. Second, consider the example of Islam. Islam is the world's second-largest religion having 1.9 billion followers (approximately 24 percent of the world population). Makkah and Madinah in Saudi Arabia are two places that all Muslims wish to visit. They make the yearly pilgrimage and, for that, they have to travel. Jews from across the world travel to Israel for their religious rites. Sikhs from across the world travel to the sub-continent (this has been made easy for them via the new Kartarpur Corridor), Hindus travel to India for their religious obligations. All of this is part of globalization. Global religious interdependency has left no option to end globalization.

Lastly, the solidarity shown by countries in these difficult times to fight against Coronavirus is a proof that major pandemic cannot divide countries, but only unite them. For example, right after the outbreak of Covid-19, China donated testing kits to Cambodia, sent planeloads of ventilators, masks, and medics to Italy and France, pledged to help the Philippines, Spain, and other countries, and deployed medics to Iran and Iraq. Similarly, the World Bank group moved quickly to help countries respond to coronavirus. The group expects to deploy up to $160 billion over the next 15 months to help countries. WHO (World Health Organization) is willing to help countries on an equal footing. More than that, America provided more than 100 ventilators to Pakistan to support Covid-19 response. Pakistan has started making their first in-house ventilators using technology they imported. All of this is proof for globalization and proof that globalization is required more than ever now.

Evidence provided above puts an end to the assumption of Coronavirus bringing about an end to globalization. With that said, what is the way forward? How can countries work together to stop the pandemic? We must unite nationally and globally to fight this pandemic and everyone needs to take individual responsibility. All lives matter regardless of geographic, social or religious boundaries. Global leaders must unite to ensure everyone everywhere has access to the vaccine when it comes about, tests and treatments for Covid-19.

There is a dire need to change our attitude and modify our priorities at all levels; at the government level, the organizational or corporate level, and the individual level. At the government level, the state must ensure smart lockdowns, complete lockdowns in the most-affected areas, implement SOPs in real meanings, and educate and encourage citizens to fight against pandemic instead of worrying about it.

Effective use of social media to share correct information has become a necessity. Instead of creating panic through misinformation, highly authorized, and transparent data



must be shared. For example, India has launched WhatsApp chatbot to share correct information, and to avoid uncalled for panic. Media must be used in a positive way around the globe.

Global superpowers including United States of America, and China should pursue both bilateral and multilateral settings and all must cooperate on vaccine creation, and assist the poorest nations in battling the virus just like they did in the year 2014 to address the Ebola Crisis in Africa. They should prioritize the development of strategic reserves over economic nationalism.

In conclusion, one can safely say that form and shape of globalization will be altered, but end of globalization is not a possibility.

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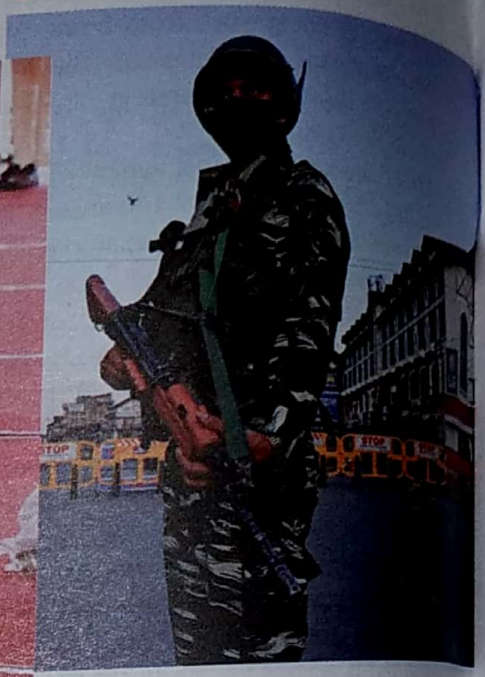
Demolition Men Do Not Build Nations, THEY DESTROY THEM



Siddharth Varadarajan

Noted Indian-American journalist, editor and academic Siddharth Varadarajan recently published an article in which he made a scathing criticism on the Hindutva-promoting steps being taken by Narendra Modi government. He discussed curfew in Kashmir at great length and also the start of construction of Ram temple at the site where once Babri Mosque stood for over four centuries. He termed such steps as an insult to India and its people. Below is the said article:

August 5 – the date chosen consciously by baleful men to humiliate the people of India whose independence on August 15 they never fought for – will go down in history as a day that celebrates the triumph of vandalism and destruction over renewal and regeneration, crime and illegality over law and justice, fiction and fabrication over reality and truth.

On the appointed day, when India slept, the people of Kashmir awoke to curfew and unfreedom. On the appointed day, a group of criminals among those assembled in Ayodhya basked in the freedom they have to build a temple – their temple, and not Rama's and certainly not India's – despite belonging in prison for having planned and orchestrated the demolition of a mosque that stood in its place for over four centuries.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi supervising the obsequies, the wreckage of what remains of the Indian constitution has been interred in the foundations of the temple that his organisation, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, is building with the full backing of the 'secular' Indian state. I say 'what remains of the constitution' because key sections of that document had already been waterboarded and drowned in the dark waters of Dal Lake – its pages torn and scattered in the days, weeks and months which followed the scrapping of Article 370 and 35A last August.

Both these acts which help to define the 'New India' Modi is ushering in – of turning citizens (in Kashmir, but later elsewhere) into subjects without fundamental rights, of allowing Hindu chauvinist criminals to take control of the scene of their crime and present their factional project as a 'national' one – would not have been possible without the indulgence of the Supreme Court. But as a journalist, I find the complicity of the media to be just as shocking.

A dominant section of India's media has helped the ruling

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Bharatiya Janata Party market two enormous lies. First, that a temple of the Sangh, by the Sangh and for the Sangh is really a 'Hindu' temple or, even more fancifully, an 'Indian' temple. And second, that the abolition of Article 370 and 35A of the constitution and the scrapping of statehood for Jammu and Kashmir was intended to help the fight against terrorism, promote economic development and make the people of the erstwhile state true Indians.

I don't know what perverted axiom of astrology has linked both these big lies with the same date on the calendar but one can sense a desire on the part of the RSS to build a narrative around a chosen day which they can present as the marker of their 'New India'.

The campaign to demolish the Babri Masjid and replace it with a Ram temple was first and always an RSS-BJP campaign. From the mid-1980s to the destruction of the mosque on December 6, 1992, the BJP used the RSS cadre base to launch a highly visible agitation. And though the resulting communal polarisation helped the BJP grow its presence in parliament from two seats in 1984 to 85 in 1989 and 182 a decade later, its vote share, even when Atal Bihari Vajpayee became prime minister in 1999, never exceeded 24%. A decade later, the party's vote share had fallen to 18% and though Narendra Modi has increased the BJP's votes, the 2019 election saw only 37% of Indians voting in an 'either you're with us or against us' fight for the party whose manifesto promised a lot of things and also a Ram temple in Ayodhya.

I mention vote shares here because that is the only observable metric we have to gauge the actual appeal of the temple. Yet, today we are being told, by the RSS and BJP of course, but also by breathless television anchors, that the temple whose foundation stone Modi laid on August 5 represents the fulfilment of a long pent-up national demand. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

"Centuries of struggle are coming to an end today," the prime minister said, forgetting the fact that the Sangh's "struggle" is barely 35 years old. Modi then added: "I'm sure scores of people can barely believe that they are alive to see this day." What he did not say was that thousands more are indeed not alive to see this day – because the violence triggered by the Sangh's temple agitation took their lives.

Modi fast-tracked the mandir project through the courts even as he used his control over the Central Bureau of Investigation to ensure the criminal case against the conspirators who demolished the mosque made no progress. The court's verdict was perverse – it accepted that the Muslims had been illegally and forcibly dispossessed of their mosque and that the 1992 demolition was a crime, and yet allowed the site to be given to those who were still standing trial for that crime. What made this bizarre verdict possible was that very criminal act, without which the court would have had to order a historic mosque's demolition in order to allow the Sangh parivar to have its way. I like to believe our lordships would have baulked at delivering such an order.

After the verdict, the government promptly announced the establishment of a trust to oversee the temple. However, the pretence of this being a non-partisan project came to an end quickly when Nritya Gopal Das and Champat Rai – key figures in the Sangh's temple agitation who have been indicted by the CBI for demolishing the Babri masjid and can still be imprisoned for the crime – emerged as president and secretary of the trust, respectively.

Narendra Modi and Yogi Adityanath have used the temple event and its surrounding media hype to force-fit the Republic of India into a Hindu mould that its constitution would never have allowed. The August 5 event is the clearest sign yet that the Hindu rashtra project of the RSS is now in high gear and will gather even greater

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momentum in the months and years ahead.

Modi gave advance notice of this project during the 2019 Lok Sabha election, when he attacked the voters of Wayanad for belonging to a constituency where "the minority is the majority" and when he ridiculed the notion that Hindus could be terrorists and hand-picked Pragya Thakur as the BJP's candidate for Bhopal.

His first major act in his second term as a prime minister, apart from the 'triple talaq' detour, was to take an axe to the constitutional arrangements with Jammu and Kashmir that had actually served the Indian state and its requirements perfectly well. One year on, it is clear that 'integration' for the Kashmiris means being deprived of rights that the constitution of India gives all citizens. And since there is no one to speak up for the constitution anymore, people in the rest of India will slowly find themselves getting 'integrated' with the new reality that the Kashmiris have been dealing with – and they will find their own freedoms and right increasingly trampled underfoot. As the experience of Pakistan and Israel demonstrate, cultural-religious states that privilege identitarian values over citizenship are incompatible with democracy. August 5 is the date that symbolises the path Modi has chosen for India.

Given the current wave of right-wing populism, it has become something of a fashion to compare Modi with Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, Jair Bolsonaro and Recep Erdogan. But the strongman in whose disastrous foot-steps Modi appears to be dragging India is Slobodan Milosevic. Younger readers will be forgiven for asking 'Who?', for his country, the former Yugoslavia, no longer exists.

The UN's long-standing ambassador in India in the late 1990s was a diplomat named Feodor Starcevic. He came to India as a citizen of Yugoslavia. But when he was leaving Delhi after retiring sometime around 2003, I remember him saying, 'I don't know which country I'm going back to'.

Beginning in the early 1990s, Yugoslavia's leaders decided to turn their back on the idea of a state that belonged equally to all its citizens, regardless of religion, ethnicity, language or script. So today, there are seven separate countries or entities, if we include Kosovo, where there was once one.

India was just emerging from the trauma of the Gujarat violence of 2002 when Starcevic was leaving. At a farewell speech, he urged his host country to look at Yugoslavia in order to learn what not to do. No one could have foreseen at the time that the man whose stewardship had prompted that sage advice would eventually be at the helm of national affairs. But the RSS listens to no one but itself. On August 5, Modi laid the foundation stone for a structure conceived in the crucible of lies and deceit, violence and bloodshed. He can call it a temple, perhaps he can convince millions of people that it is a temple. But nothing spiritual or holy can ever emerge from a structure built by men who have spent their entire political career demolishing law, morality and the bonds of unity that unite Indians with each other. ■

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Foreign Policy of China

Salient Features and Challenges

Aftab H. Wahla

Mao Zedong ruled China from 1949 to 1976 and remained the chief architect of his country's foreign policy during that period. Given his revolutionary nature, US' military and economic assistance to Kuomintang (nationalist government) during the civil war, socialist underpinning of his political thoughts and decolonization process, he was convinced that the US was a neo-imperialist and neo-colonialist power. Consequently, he pursued ideologically-driven foreign policy so as to preempt imperialistic powers gaining foothold in newly-independent countries. In addition, Mao, owing to ideological proximity and material assistance provided by the Soviet Union, developed bonhomie with the USSR. But that did not last long. Soon, the question of leadership of socialist bloc, alleged poor transfer of technology by USSR, China's condemnation of Soviet role in Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 and suppression of popular uprising in Czechoslovakia deteriorated the relations. US President Nixon's visit to China in 1972 further plunged the ties between the two socialist countries. Mao also attempted to position China as the leader of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), but failed to achieve that objective as differences with India and Indonesia made him eschew taking any active role in the organization. Objectively speaking, Chairman Mao could not position China as the leading player of the world due to hostile relationships with then-superpowers, persistence of thorny issues with NAM countries and largely antagonistic attitude of the major powers. Succinctly, Mao-led foreign policies resulted in isolation and insignificant role of China in the development of international norms, standards and procedures in various realms.

Mao Zedong's Cultural Revolution proved disastrous for Chinese society as it ignited a civil war-like situation. Moreover, the consumption of state resources in the subsequent rehabilitation and recovery process further decreased popular support for his adventurous and ideology-driven foreign policy.

After Chairman Mao, Deng Xiaoping, the person often considered the father of modern China, adopted an inward-looking approach. Learning from past mistakes, Deng orchestrated a policy of "hiding one's capabilities and biding one's time." The policy emphasized on the concentration of energies on China's own development, avoiding unnecessary foreign entanglements and maintaining favourable and benign regional atmosphere for smooth growth and development. Through this cautious and passive foreign policy, Deng

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endeavoured to cash in on strategic opportunities to enable China to strengthen its national capabilities before embarking upon aggressive foreign policy to resolve its territorial or trade-related disputes. Consequently, Deng pursued pragmatic and internationally-accepted realistic foreign policy. It established diplomatic relations with the United States in 1979, improved bilateral ties with USSR (and later with Russia), explored opportunities for trade and financial cooperation with India and other regional countries and, most importantly, launched economic reforms at home. He introduced a unique socialist market economy retaining one-party rule and deregulating the economy. Through his SME model, Deng sought amalgamation of capitalistic economic tools with socialist political system. Although the Communist Party of China (CPC) maintained absolute control over Chinese military, domestic security services and propaganda apparatus, markets were deregulated, offering lucrative business opportunities to the Western business enterprises. The policy proved tremendously successful. With this policy, Chinese economy continued to grow at around 10% annually. This growth rate helped push 800 million people out of poverty, the highest figure in human history. At the end of the Cold War, China emerged as a fast-growing economy—as well as a formidable military power—that was increasingly becoming confident about its inevitability in the international political and economic landscape. After Deng's death in 1997, his successors successfully maintained spectacular economic growth and continued to use economic diplomacy as China's major thrust in international relations throughout the turbulent first decade of twenty-first century. Deng's dictum remained an unchallengeable guiding principle for Chinese foreign-policy makers till then.

The World Financial Crisis of 2008-09, and successful hosting of the 2008 Beijing Olympics made China confident of its global economic prowess. That self-realization helped ignite the debate on pros and cons of shifting to a proactive and an aggressive foreign policy. Although the debate ended in favour of carrying on with Deng's philosophy, it paved the way for President Xi Jinping to pursue a bold and hawkish foreign policy in subsequent years.

A watershed moment in the history of Chinese foreign policy came when President Xi Jingping was elected as president in 2013. With multiple initiatives in global finance and trade, as well as in diplomacy, President Xi successfully transformed Chinese role in international economy and politics. On the strength of institutional reforms that he spearheaded, the 19th Congress of Communist Party of China, which was held in 2017, unanimously voted to include Xi Jinping's thought in the constitution, and also abolished the two-term limit for presidency, thereby making him the greatest Chinese leader after Mao and Deng. Given the wide-ranging consequences of his policies, signature initiatives of President Xi in the realm of foreign policy have been discussed in the following paragraphs.

There is no denying the fact that China is one of the biggest beneficiaries of the current liberal world order. Its long term interests are inexorably linked with the survival of the legal, political and financial global frameworks. In this background, China launched various initiatives to fill the gaps left by established institutions. Establishment of BRICS New Development Bank, which provides developing countries with an alternative source of funding, helping them avoid ruthless structural adjustment and brutal conditionalities of IMF and the World Bank, is one such initiative. President Xi also sought to expand global clout of China through BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB) is another such financial institution, through which China has emerged as leader in global finance and development. With 56 members and $100 billion in subscribed capital, AIIB is quickly emerging as a rival to the World Bank. President Xi has also employed AIIB as a foreign policy tool as it has helped create the dependency of other countries on Chinese investment and finance, thereby building favourable international opinion for its core security concerns. Both AIIB and BRICS manifest the growing confidence of China vis- à-vis its place in international politics and finance.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a signature project of President Xi, should also be seen as an indication of growing domestic demand to restore pre-Opium War status of China. The $1.3 trillion worth infrastructure development initiative, which has extended its footprint to Eurasia and Africa, will help improve road, railways, fiber optics and maritime connectivity of Asia Pacific, Central Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, Africa, Europe and even the western hemisphere. The sheer magnitude of the project is enough to underline the proactive foreign policy being pursued by President Xi. The proposed investment under BRI is 12 times higher than the Marshall Plan of the United States for Europe, and is set to influence the foreign policies of more than 60 countries having a

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population of around 4.4 billion. Though BRI is inherently economic initiative, its most pronounced impact is the growing global influence of China. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a flagship project of BRI, is expected to witness China's westward expansion (Afghanistan and CARs), provided the Afghan peace process culminates in political stability there. In this regard, President Xi's upcoming visit to Pakistan has assumed renewed significance as it is expected to formalize the process of transformation of CPEC into a vehicle of regional connectivity.

Multilateral diplomacy is another area where President Xi has pushed for a greater, leading role of China. The underlying objective of aggressive multilateral diplomacy is to strengthen the voice of China within existing international political, legal, financial and trade-related institutions. Trump-led retrenchment of the United States in various global platforms has created a void that China is vigorously seeking to fill. President Trump has withdrawn the US from UNESCO, Paris Agreement, UN Human Right Council and JCPOA (US-Iran Nuclear Deal). Trump's decisions of cutting US funding to the World Health Organization in the aftermath of Covid-19 and paralyzing the Appeal Court of World Trade Organization have further undermined the rule-based liberal world order. Contrary to this, President Xi has always advocated for multilateralism, and criticized the unilateralism and protectionism being pursued by Trump. In his Davos speech from the World Economic Forum in 2017, he said: "We must remain committed to developing global free trade and investment, and promote trade and investment liberalization." His words earned widespread laurels and he was termed by many as a steadfast defender of free trade, globalization and economic openness. Environmental conservation is one such global arena where China has effectively become a global leader, spearheading global efforts for combating climate change, mobilizing resources to mitigate the impacts of ecological deterioration and conducting research in devising technological and institutional means to adapt to global warming.

Establishment of increasingly closer ties with Iran is another of President Xi's bold foreign policy initiatives—it is a clear deviation from Deng's stated policy of maintaining peaceful diplomatic relations with superpowers. In spite of the fact that any strategic or economic outreach to Iran is set to attract toughest US sanctions, President Xi has reportedly signed a $400 billion worth agreement with Iran—being dubbed as Lion-Dragon agreement. Under this agreement, as reported by the New York Times, China will invest in Iran's banking, transport and development sectors and will receive, in exchange heavily-discounted, uninterrupted supply of Iranian oil for the next 25 years. Viewed together with Iranian decision of dropping New Delhi from key railway project of Chabahar, the agreement signals new geopolitical alignment in Asia being nudged by China. This budding partnership is likely to have far-reaching ramifications for the regional geopolitics and economy. In terms of consequences, Chinese will be able to extend their influence across the length of Arabian coast and expand their control over the Strait of Hormuz, one of the seven key maritime chokepoints (other choke points are: Danish Strait, Turkish Strait, Suez Canal, Bab el-Mandeb Strait, Strait of Malacca and Panama Canal). Furthermore, with already stronger footprints of China in Gwadar and Djibouti, a Sino-Iranian partnership will augment Chinese position in the Indian Ocean, thereby undermining Bahrain-based US Fifth Fleet and ensuring the security of sea lines of communication (SLOCs), which are, no doubt, lifeline for its energy security.

Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 from Wuhan, Indian and Western media have been blaming China for using this pandemic as a cover for its aggressive foreign policy. To substantiate, they refer to establishment of two administrative districts in South China Sea; the bloody

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India-China stand-off in eastern Ladakh, and the imposition of National Security Law in Hong Kong that effectively abrogated semi-autonomous status of the city, thereby violating 1997 Sino-UK agreement. The objective analysis of these developments however, reveals that this distraction theory holds no water. Every move that China has taken has its own logical and convincing underlying reasons, which are completely distinct from the pandemic. The immediate trigger for the Ladakh standoff was provided by Indian construction of road infrastructure that could have put China in a disadvantageous position in terms of rapid mobilization of troops in any future conflict. Neither the construction of roads was a new phenomenon, nor was China-led aggression to stop that infrastructure-development activities—in fact, Line of Actual Control has seen multiple face-offs since 2017.

Enforcement of National Security Law recently was the culmination of a long struggle. The law is meant to restore political stability in Hong Kong, strengthen the hold of mainland China there, and enhance the capacity of the HK police to thwart any future mass protests against China. The increased patrol of the US navy in South China Sea, which China considers a direct challenge to its maritime claims, prompted it to build administrative units. Conclusively speaking, recent ostensibly aggressive Chinese moves were offshoot of China's long-term foreign policy goals. They were neither opportunistic actions, nor reactionary ones to exploit the obsession of the world in Covid-19 disease management including recovery and rehabilitation responses.

Like any country with ambitious foreign policy objectives, China is also struggling to cope with multifarious challenges. The fullest realization of BRI through smooth execution of various projects has become an uphill task for China. Despite investing huge political and financial capital, President Xi is finding it hard to execute the BRI projects. Sectarian violence, political upheaval, legal obstacles due to hodgepodge of national laws, entrenched corruption, populist blowback due to apprehensions regarding debt unsustainability and now Covid-19-caused disruption in economic activities are impediments to the realization of BRI potential.

Though Trump-led isolationism has shrunk America's role in international affairs, it still enjoys unchallengeable dominance in global finance and politics, which necessitates better US-China working relations. Avoiding a complete breakdown with the US while safeguarding core financial and security interests is another major foreign policy challenge for President Xi. Ongoing trade war that has been expanded to include banning of Chinese tech giants like Huawei, TikTok, WeChat, tit-for-tat closure of consulates, deepening Indo-US strategic partnership and allegations and counter-allegations surrounding Covid-19 are serious irritants in the US-China ties. Trump's falling popularity due to mismanagement of Covid-19 and his strategic manoeuvring to blame China for the pandemic to avoid Trump's defeat in November election are set to further deteriorate the Sino-US relationship.

The third major challenge is a stable periphery that is establishing peaceful relationships with neighbouring countries to avoid containment or encirclement by the US. China's territorial conflicts with India and Southeast Asian nations and strained ties with South Korea and Japan could potentially strengthen US efforts under its 'Pivot to Asia' policy. Growing unpopularity in Taiwan and increasingly louder pro-democracy voices in Hong Kong are serious hurdles in achieving the ultimate dream of President Xi: unification of China. US sanctions on Chinese officials and US Health Secretary Alex Azar's recent visit to Taiwan—Washington's highest level engagement with Taiwan since its switching of diplomatic recognition to China in 1979— have further plunged their ties to historic lows. The damage control regarding the origin of Covid-

19 pandemic in China and avoiding the 'imperial overstretch' are also significant challenges that President Xi is coping with.

China's ascendency to the world stage is an irrefutable reality, but the apprehensions that China is undermining the rule-based world liberal order are, however, ill-founded and carry no weight. China will not challenge the existing world architecture; it will attempt, nonetheless, to tweak global norms and standards to make the system inclusive for a multipolar world. Multilateralism, inclusive global governance, institutionalized world response to emergencies, coordinated ecological preservation and impregnable anti-proliferation safeguards warrant a proactive role of China, and it is heartening to see that China is offering effective leadership to meet all these challenges.

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Kamran Adil

Designing Police Reforms

... and the latest police reforms in the United States

Introduction

Designing police reforms is a challenge. More often than not, the tendency is to appoint a group of people claiming to have know-how and experience in dealing with police matters with predefined terms of reference (ToRs); the group then locks itself within the parameters drawn by the ToRs. This approach has not worked very well as the reform design shaped by the predefined ToRs takes away much of the initiative, and nudges the group in a particular direction. In case of Pakistan, over two dozen police reforms committees/commissions/bodies worked within this framework and proposed changes, but the debate over the reform design has seldom been undertaken. Presently, the same situation is being faced by the United States where everyone has his own reform design for police. The range of variety of this reform menu is from defunding police to tightening the accountability gaps to reversing the case law on the subject of personal liability of a police officer. This write-up will briefly examine the range of approaches being taken in the United States to reform the police and will try to briefly analyze how important is the reform design debate in the context of Pakistan.

US Police Reform

The array of options for police reforms being considered by the United States lately are:

1. Task Force on 21st-century Policing

The killing of George Floyd was not a first-of-its-kind event in the United States; rather there has been a systemic pattern that was largely ignored by the policymakers. More lately, in August 2014, Michael Brown, a black man, was killed by Darren Wilson of the Ferguson Police Department in the state of Missouri. The killing resulted in widespread protests. Barack H. Obama, the then-US President, established the President's Task Force for 21st-century Policing through an executive order (EO. No. 13684/2014). Despite the bombastic title of the Task Force, its stated mission was relatively narrow and abstract. The mission required the Task Force to 'identify best practices and otherwise make recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust'. The Task Force, in its report, identified eight pillars and made specific recommendations with regards to each pillar separately. The focus of the report was on 'trust' aspect of policing, and on 'demilitarization' of police forces. The report mainly touched on value portion of the police reforms and its actual implementation was to be done by the states/federating units as the federal government had little mandate to directly reform the police under the US constitution. It does, however, try to shape the reforms by controlling federal funding stream as introduced by the law (Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994), introduced by Joe Biden, the now forerunner democratic candidate for the upcoming US presidential election. Obviously, given the limited role of the federal government in the matter, the outcome of the Task Force remained limited and the practice of abuse of power continued leading to many similar instances, including George Floyd's case which again captured the attention of the whole country in the 2020 and this time, the global media also picked it up more fervently.

2. Safe Policing for Safe Communities

The current US President, Donald Trump, in response to the protests with regards to excessive use of force in George Floyd's case - in his least caring style - issued an executive order (EO. No. 13929/20) that focused on the use of force by police. The order requires the US Attorney General (AG) to certify independent credentialing bodies that could then review policies regarding the use of force and de-escalation

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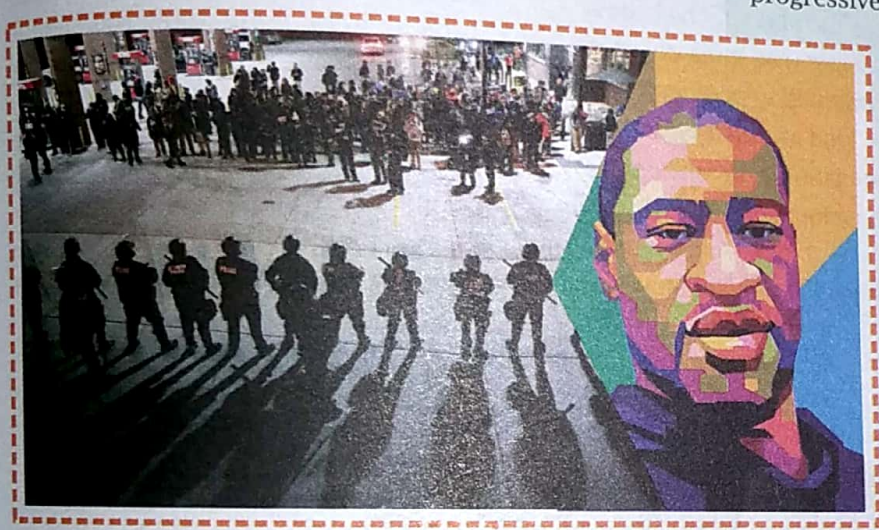
techniques. The order requires the AG also to engage the community and to incentivize the federal grants to police organizations to spur implementation of standards set by credential bodies on the use of force. The order also requires establishing of a database of law-enforcement officers on their terminations/decertification, criminal convictions for on-duty conduct and civil judgements against them. The order focuses on the individual police officer instead of on the ecology and police culture in which he operates.

3. Legislative Initiatives

In addition to executive order by the US President, different legislative moves have also been made. Democrats moved a bill titled as 'Justice in Policing Act, 2020' (JPA). The JPA's main features are:

(a) It intends to introduce a registry of police misconduct complaints and disciplinary actions.

(b) It aims to create an independent process to investigate misconduct.



(c) It requires technology to be used on duty in form of body-worn cameras, dashboard cameras on cars, and establishing online real-time databases to measure the extent of the problem of abuse of police power.

The draft law prohibits chokeholds/carotid holds and transfer of military equipment to police. The law is not likely to pass, and is gridlocked.

Another such legislative initiative is the draft Law Enforcement Trust and Integrity Act, 2020 (LETIA) which proposes to establish national policing standards and accreditations and their sharing through database. It also proposes to link federal funding to police agencies with implementation of national policing standards. Another initiative is the introduction of the Elimination of Qualified Immunity Act, 2020 (EQIA) that is aimed at doing away with the defence of Qualified Immunity that got introduced in the US law through a US Supreme Court judgement in Harlow v. Fitzgerald, in which, the actions of police officers were shielded at a threshold of reasonableness, a notch above the classical bona fide act doctrine.

4. Defunding Police

The 'defunding police' sloganeering continued for sometime after George Floyd's death. It was an emotional reaction with roots in the work of Alex Vitale who wrote 'End of Policing' arguing to divest police and to taken non-crime approaches in the society. The sloganeering gradually died down as many argued it to be totally wrong and unsustainable. Conversely, there were many voices to invest more in police to improve their ecology and police culture.

5. Designing Police Reforms in Pakistan

The case of designing police reforms for Pakistan has been equally challenging. Every commission/committee/institution tasked with the reforms has taken its own approach. From the design perspective, the police reforms have predominantly been designed to achieve a progressive legal framework by getting the colonial police law (the Police Act, 1861) substituted with a progressive and modern police law (the Police Order, 2002). The Police Reforms Committee Report, 2019, that was constituted on the order of the Supreme Court of Pakistan introduced the urban policing as a full-fledged term of reference, thus leading to widening of the design to include urban policing.

Another dimension that is largely shaping police reforms is the impact of information technology and how to internalize it with intrinsically legalistic processes of police working. In the post-Covid-19 world, the community and policing dimension have further been expanded. Finally, the dimension of democratic security has also been suggested by some to be part of police reforms design. The concept of design, it may be noted, is not static and keeps on evolving within the larger framework of the constitutional system of the country. For Pakistan, the police reforms in the US have as, once again, reaffirmed the importance of cooperative federalism, which can bring criminal law and its subset of policing as a shared responsibility of the federation and the provinces.

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Syed Sharfuddin

At the last UN General Assembly (UNGA) session in New York in September 2019, the leaders of Turkey, Pakistan and Malaysia agreed to launch a joint television channel to counter the growing anti-Islam propaganda in the West arising from sustained news focused on terrorism and unending armed conflicts in Muslim-majority countries. What was often lacking in sensational news headlines and politically loaded op-ed columns was the rich cultural heritage of Islam and the values of keeping faith, tolerance, rule of law, peace, justice and human rights as essential features of Muslims' national identity.

Every year, dozens of high-level meetings that are held on the margins of the UNGA draw international media headlines, but there is no subsequent follow-up or results. However, last year's meeting of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan and Malaysia's then Prime Minister Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad was neither a media sound bite nor a photo opportunity for their domestic public.

Following a tri-lateral meeting of Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Malaysian Premier Dr Mahathir bin Mohamad on the sidelines of the 74th UNGA session in New York last year, the three countries announced setting up a joint English language channel to confront the challenges posed by Islamophobia, and removing "misperceptions" about Islam. The three countries affirmed to pool their talent and knowledge, and to collaborate in research and development. The establishment of the channel was aimed at offering Muslims a dedicated media presence to help fight the growing anti-Islam propaganda.

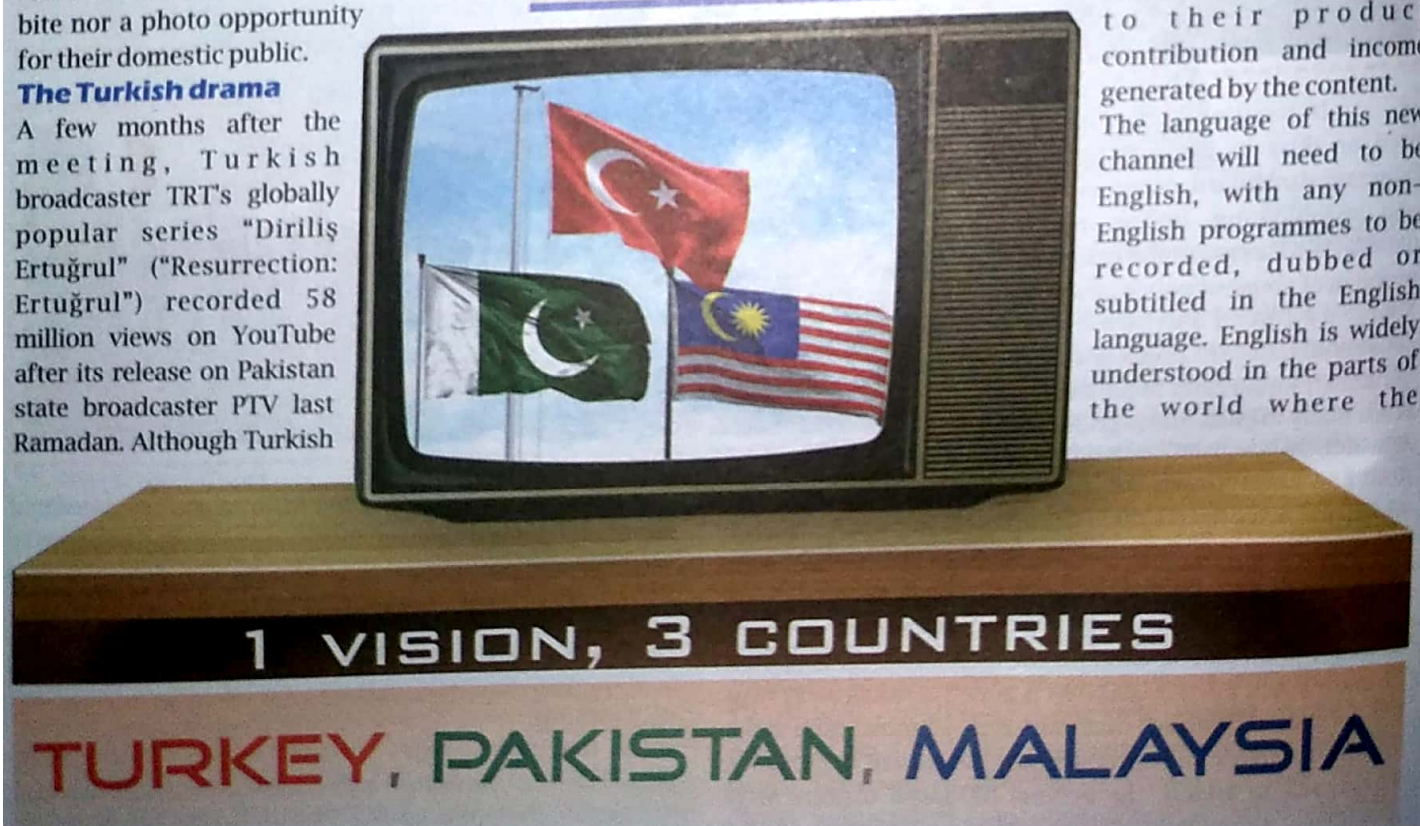
The Turkish drama

A few months after the meeting, Turkish broadcaster TRT's globally popular series "Diriliş Ertuğrul" ("Resurrection: Ertuğrul") recorded 58 million views on YouTube after its release on Pakistan state broadcaster PTV last Ramadan. Although Turkish TV dramas are popular in many Islamic countries, this was the first time a foreign state broadcaster was asked by its head of government to dub the popular Turkish series in Urdu to give Pakistani viewers an opportunity to learn about the ancient history of modern Turkey in their own language. The series has resulted in two statues of Ertuğrul Gazi erected in Lahore and a robust discussion in the country about Muslim history in Central and South Asia.

The airing of "Diriliş Ertuğrul" on PTV on an official level represents the first step toward implementing the decision of the three leaders. It shows the way forward for bringing together the comparative advantages of the state broadcasters of the three countries to dub the existing audio-visual material and produce new feature films, dramas and historical documentaries in several languages, capturing the rich heritage of Islamic civilization worldwide.

To reach a global audience, a new international TV channel will need to be started on the internet and expanded on the transponders of various global satellites, with expenses shared by the three countries in proportion to their product contribution and income generated by the content.

The language of this new channel will need to be English, with any non-English programmes to be recorded, dubbed or subtitled in the English language. English is widely understood in the parts of the world where the



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problem of Islamophobia is most prominent.

The three countries possess different comparative advantages besides their high-quality programming. Pakistan's use of English as an official language can help in the professional translation and dubbing of existing television dramas and new series; Turkey's rich heritage in Islamic history and its large satellite footprint in Europe are also a distinct advantage.

Malaysia is centrally placed in Southeast Asia to reach out to not only its own population but also to the rest of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region where English programming is quite limited in content.

Turkey's TRT has many digital TV channels that focus on news, traditional music, dramas and documentaries. Some of these are also aired in other languages on satellites in Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East.

Its international news channel, TRT World, is watched all over the world on TV and mobile devices. But all of these channels focus on Turkey reaching out to its expatriates and friends abroad and reporting on matters important from its national perspective.

An international television channel that promotes the interests of multiple state players and is focused on the common objective of promoting positive Islamic values is still needed in the current broadcasting scenario.

Television's role

In starting a new television channel, the main requirement is content. In a 24/7 broadcasting range, television content must remain fresh and continuous to capture and retain the interest of viewers. Repeated programs often lose audiences.

News coverage can provide some fresh content on a daily basis, but a news channel was not what the leaders visualized last year. Besides, there is no point adding one more Muslim news channel to the list of successful channels already operating globally such as Al-Jazeera, TRT World and Arab News TV.

The aim of the new channel should be not only to reach out to the wider Western public, which has little knowledge of Islamic history and social values, but also to millions of TV viewers in East and Central Europe, the Far East and Central Asia who have been out of the loop on Islamic history due to their peculiar national and political circumstances and selective coverage of satellite and internet-based TV broadcasting.

From the content point of view, if the resources of the three countries are pooled together, there will be no deficit of broadcast material. What will be required is converting most of the existing comedy, cultural dramas and documentaries into English for a global audience.

In order to be effective, one of the three state broadcasters from Turkey, Pakistan and Malaysia should be given the role of a coordinator to frame the terms of reference for ensuring balance and standardization of content.

TRT TV is well placed both in terms of resources and content to take a leading role, working in collaboration with the experienced PTV in Pakistan and the relatively new RTM TV in Malaysia.

Collaboration is vital

Parallel with this work, the telecommunication authorities in the three countries should also agree to allocate at least two transponders on their national satellites to enable their nationals to watch the current on-air broadcasts of the partner countries in their home countries.

For example, Turkey can lease out one transponder each to PTV World and RTM TV1 on its Turksat 40E satellite to enable Turkish and foreign viewers in Turkey to watch the current programs of these partner media houses. In return, Pakistan should allocate two transponders on PakSat to TRT World and RTM TV1 for Pakistani viewers to be able to watch Turkish and Malaysian state television broadcasts.

Similarly, Malaysia can enable PTV World and TRT World to reach its domestic viewers through the use of the Malaysian state satellite. This will, of course, require a trilateral agreement between the telecommunication authorities to mutually extend these facilities to each other on a reciprocal basis.

This arrangement will also require compliance with the international principle of not using another country's territory and resources, in this case, the host national satellite, to launch a sustained media attack against a third country with which the host country enjoys good relations.

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Mutual hosting will also encourage the state broadcaster in each country to improve the quality of its content, as well as production because if its programmes do not appeal to a broader internation al audience, the viewership of the new channel will decline and may even threaten the viability of the project.

A majority of television viewers in urban areas are comprised of cable subscribers. This is not only a smart way of avoiding ugly dish installations on rooftops but also an effective way to ensure regular servicing and upgrades.

However, for cable services, the choice of creating channel packages rests with the cable provider and not with the viewer. The regulators of cable operators in the three countries should make it mandatory for their service providers not to leave out the television channels of the partner countries from their basic packages or charge their subscribers more for these channels.

With the development of IPTV, the digital TV packages offered by PTCL in Pakistan, Turkcell in Turkey and the state IPTV provider in Malaysia should ensure that their IPTV Apps include designated TV channels from partner countries as part of their free local TV viewing packages.

The vision that came out from the New York meeting of the three leaders last year is not something that can be translated in six months to a year. It requires some serious groundwork to draw up the terms of reference for the project while defining the individual responsibilities the three countries should mutually share to dub existing programmes and produce new ones and investing in the commitment of the private sector to finance the project successfully.

The project should be launched in two stages. In stage one, when international flights resume after Covid-19, the officials of the three countries should meet to finalize an agreement to enable each of the three state broadcasters to access the national satellites of its partner broadcasters on a trilateral basis.

In the second stage, the new cultural television should start its test broadcast on selected platforms, with TRT playing a central role and coordinating with PTV and RTM to provide their content.

The partner countries should also host the new channel on their national and regional telecommunication satellites and their national IPTV service portals. Over time, as progress is made, more countries can be added to this "cultural coalition of the willing" such as Iran, Azerbaijan, Indonesia and Uzbekistan, as the channel gets more viewership across the Islamic world.

The old Chinese saying 'the journey of a thousand miles starts with a first step' is a time-tested truth. Turkey has taken the first step in producing a world-class television series, which is showing no sign of slowing down.

Pakistan has taken the second step by officially airing it for 220 million Pakistanis and becoming a catalyst for a healthy academic debate about Islamic values and history. The next step is to continue this trend and build enough television content to become the basis of the new TV channel the three leaders envisioned in New York.

The author is a former diplomat.

English-Language TV Channel that Combats Islamophobia

To Be Launched By:

Malaysia Turkey Pakistan

The agreement was reached by the leaders of the three countries during the UN General Assembly in New York.

Channel Objectives

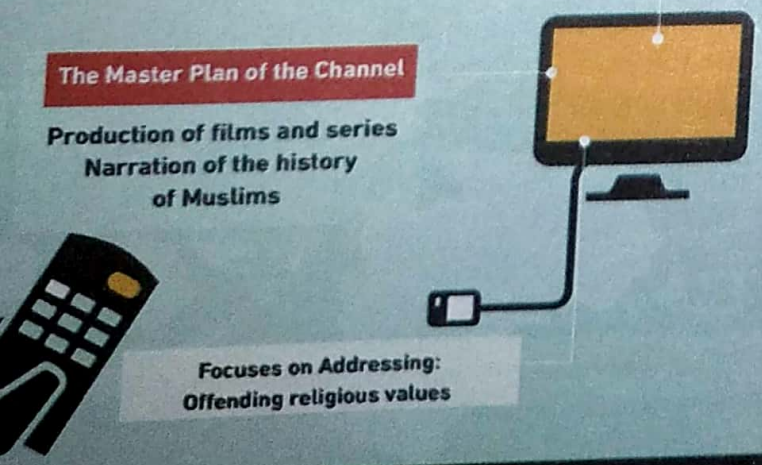
Combating the challenges posed by Islamophobia

Correcting misconceptions about Islam

Correcting the West's perceptions of Muslims

The Master Plan of the Channel

Production of films and series
Narration of the history of Muslims



Focuses on Addressing:
Offending religious values

The channel is expected to become the core of a media network on Islamic issues.

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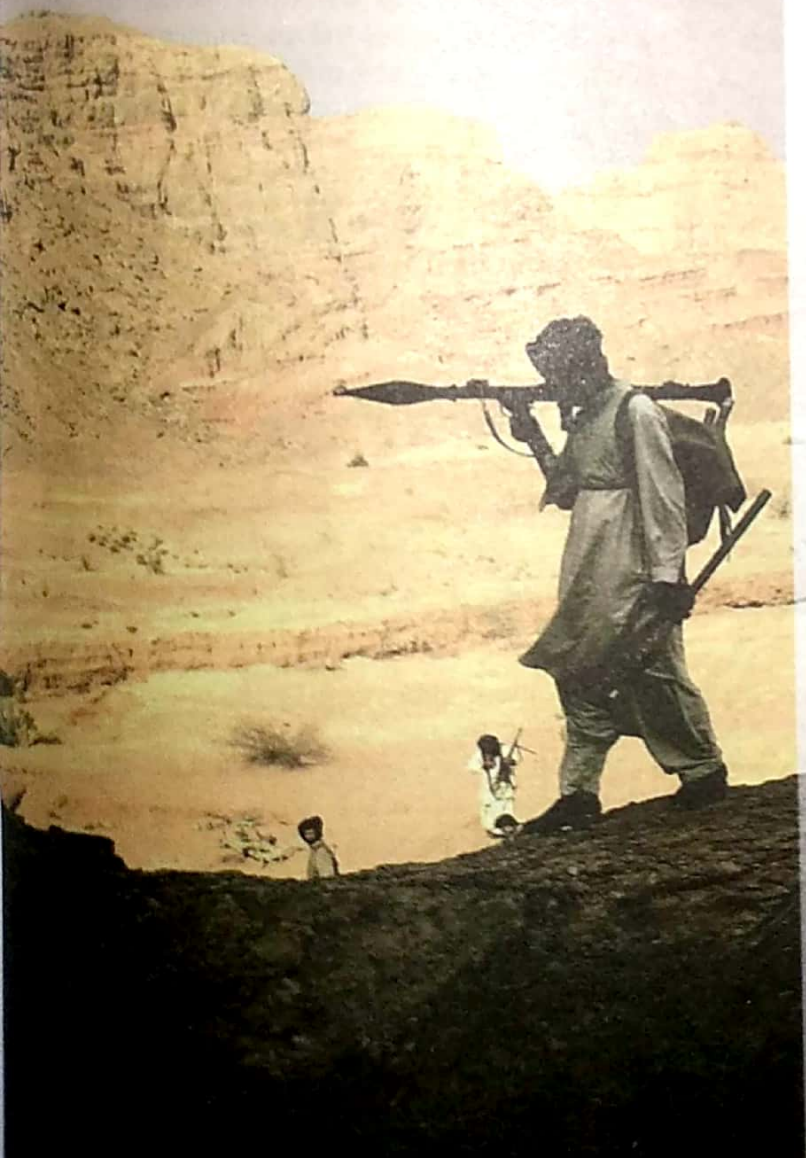
The land of the Pure has had a tumultuous history. It saw the tragic episode of the dismemberment of the country. However, unfortunately, we the Pakistani nation, have not learned any lesson from this national tragedy. Our rulers, both civilian and military, have had the same authoritarian attitude towards Balochistan as they had towards the then-East Pakistan (today's Bangladesh). Indeed, there are centrifugal forces active in the province, but it is the state itself which has, time and again, provided opportunities the enemies have taken advantage of. The callous attitude and apathy of the centre towards the sufferings of Baloch have only crystallized further the differences. Had one have a bird's eye view of the history, one would understand why Balochistan is a simmering volcano today.

The Balochistan Conundrum

Faridullah



At the time of Pakistan's independence, Balochistan consisted of four princely states — Kalat, Lasbela, Kharan and Makran — under the British Raj, with Kalat being the largest one. Like all other princely states of the Indian Subcontinent, Balochistan was also given three options: accession to India, accession to Pakistan, or independence. The Khan of Kalat and tribal elders were reluctant to accede to Pakistan but ready to concede on defence, foreign affairs and communications. However, on the orders of Quid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Balochistan was annexed to Pakistan on 28 March 1948. The Khan of Kalat was forced, as some critics claim, to sign the instrument of accession with Jinnah. However, it was agreed in this agreement that, as described in Pakistan's Resolution 1940, the province will have autonomy over all its affairs except defence, external affairs and communication which would be dealt with by the federal government. But, hitherto, this agreement, regretfully, have remained a dead letter.

Then, in 1954, the government merged all the four provinces of the then-West Pakistan into One Unit to establish parity between the two wings of Pakistan. Consequently, the Baloch, like the people of all other provinces, protested against this scheme as it would create the Baloch identity crisis under the influence of the behemoth population of Punjab. Thus, in the aftermath of the scheme, violence erupted in 1960s. Instead of defusing the tension politically, Ayub Khan, the then-President of Pakistan, deployed over 1,000 troops in the province to quell the upsurge, thus

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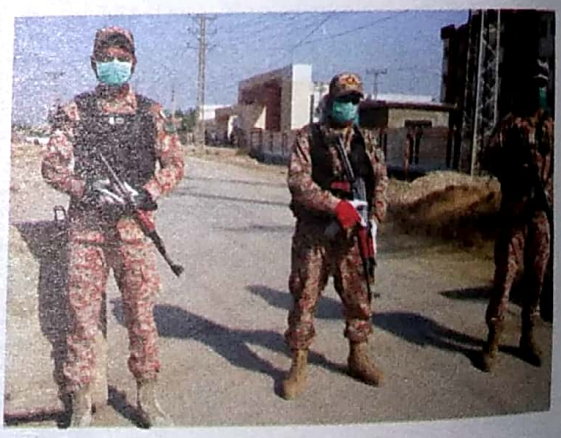
favouring the repressive measures instead of negotiations. Such repressive behaviour towards Balochistan has also been adopted by the civilian rulers. In 1972, the newly-elected government of Balochistan announced that, by replacing non-locals with locals, it would indigenise the administration of the province to exercise the provincial autonomy. Along with this move, the government also accused Islamabad for not investing in industrial development in the province, and demanded more provincial autonomy. These moves irritated the central government led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the elite of the country feared that these moves would deprive them of authority. Consequently, Bhutto deposed the non-PPP elected government of Balochistan and incarcerated many of its leaders. He justified his action on the ground—may be genuinely or otherwise as a ploy to teach a lesson to the Baloch leaders who were bold enough to demand authority over their own provincial resources—that separatist elements in the province were trying to dismember the country, as evidenced by large caches of arms and ammunition, which were recovered from the house of Iraqi military attaché. Resultantly, protests erupted in the province against the barbaric action of the federal government. Thus, instead of engaging the dissenters in political dialogue, Bhutto, though admirer of democracy but himself an authoritarian, sent over 80,000 troops to crush the rebellion, thus favouring, once again, the use of force than democratic values.



Though this episode of violence ended in 1977, the fight for provincial autonomy was now intensified into the fight for self-determination, regretfully. Had the government adopted democratic attitude, the situation would have not peppered to that extent.

The government and security institutions have, over the years, tried to hush any dissenting voice in Balochistan. In January 2005, a man, allegedly an army captain, raped a female doctor of Bugti tribe in a heavily-guarded government-owned natural gas plant in Sui, Dera Bugti. She was denied the registration of a case, and was threatened to keep quiet. After she reported her case, she was put under house arrest. This incident led to violent upsurge, especially from Bugti tribe. Upon this, the government sent over 10,000 police and soldiers to suppress the rebellion. It was on this occasion when Pervez Musharraf, the then-president of Pakistan, warned the Baloch: "[D]on't push us. This is not seventies. They [the Baloch] will not even know what has hit them [when the army strikes]."

The exploitation of resources has also made the Baloch resentful. Balochistan, being rich in natural resources like gas, copper, gold and other reserves, has been exploited over the years. But, it has, in turn, never gotten its due share in revenue generated from its own resources. Natural gas, for instance, was discovered in 1952 near Sui, a small town in Dera Bugti district. This gas had reached Rawalpindi and Multan by 1964 but never to its own town of Sui, which harboured Pakistan's biggest natural gas field—until 1990s. And that too, was only made possible when the paramilitary camps were established there by the federal government. Even the provincial capital, Quetta, got gas connections in 1970, while it had reached Lahore and Karachi by 1955.

Regrettably, even today, out of the 34 districts of Balochistan, only 14 have access to natural gas, let alone mentioning access to other basic amenities: 85% population has no access to safe drinking water, around 75% do not have access to electricity, 63% are below the poverty line, and 70% children do not have access to education. This scenario shows that, unfortunately, the rulers are not interested in Balochistan, but its land for its natural resources and strategic location.

As they have minimal representation in the centre, Baloch have been consistently demanding an increase in their representation in central bureaucracy and other federal government bodies. In 2005, there was not even a single

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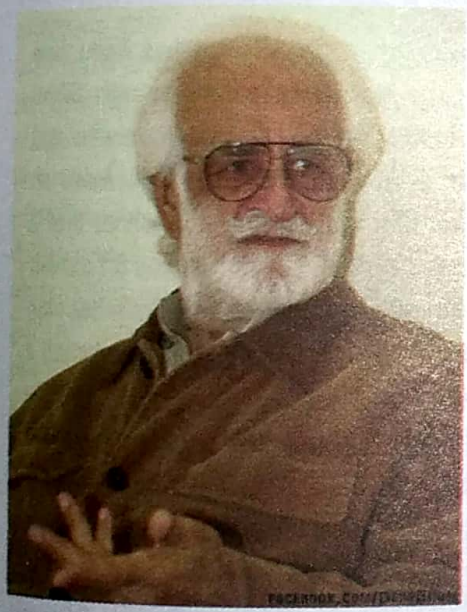
Baloch among Pakistan's ambassadors. No Baloch was at the helm of one of the 200 corporations while only 502 young Baloch were recruited in the army, according to a report by Pakistan Institute of Peace Studies (PIPS). Baloch representation in the army, which was nil in 2001, rose to 3.2% only in 2007. Even in Baloch regiment, 80% personnel are Punjabis. Baloch even have no considerable share of jobs in Gwadar port and other CPEC-related projects in their own province. At one time, there were only thirty Baloch out of 600 workers hired for the development of Gwadar port.

Thus, it can be inferred from the foregoing discussion that Baloch have genuine grievances. However, Islamabad, unfortunately, has had kept its iron curtain policy towards them.

Our rulers have, sadly, never heeded to the sufferings and legal demands of the Baloch. Due to its meagre population, politicians have always been concentrating on other provinces, especially Punjab, which garners them more seats to make their way to the treasury benches. Such attitude has alienated our Baloch brethren in their own country, and has made ways for the centrifugal forces in the province.



The destructive elements exploit the vulnerable segment of the society to inflict collateral damage to this beloved country of ours. Indeed, the enemy is exploiting the current situation in Balochistan, but the state itself is responsible for creating such conditions which enemies are out to take advantage of. External forces can only build on local fissure and take advantage of conditions created domestically.

Being the victims of historical amnesia, we have forgotten the East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) debacle where such behaviour of our rulers led to the national tragedy. Regretfully, the current situation of Balochistan and that in the then-East Pakistan are becoming Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Nations that learn from their history have better chances of survival and progressing than those who don't.

Despite the fact that political engagement and negotiations will earn the state the trust of the aggrieved Baloch people, the state is reluctant to engage politically of the fear that softer approach towards insurgents would be interpreted as weakness on the part of the state. However, the hard security engagement builds up anger in communities, especially the youth. Being half-hearted towards the political solution, even our democratic leaders have always viewed Balochistan from security prism.

Recently, Akhtar Jan Mengal, the chairman of Balochistan National Party (BNP), withdrew from the PTI coalition government over its failure to implement the Six-Point Formula signed with the party in 2018. These six points included: recovery of missing persons, implementation of National Action Plan, implementation of six percent quota for Balochistan in the federal government, immediate repatriation of the Afghan refugees, and construction of dams in the province to resolve the acute water crisis. When the centre turns a deaf ear to such legal and constitutional demands, it further alienates the already aggrieved Baloch.

Remedially, to pacify the Balochistan cauldron, and to resolve its decades-old issues, the state should remove the grievances and reservations of the Baloch people, and incorporate them in CPEC, which may prove a game-changer for Baloch people, too, to bring peace to their province.

Long-term solution to the violence is to politically engage the Baloch population and restart a reconciliatory dialogues with the separatist leaders in order to bring them back to the political mainstream in a peaceful manner. It will only happen if the state is willing to take bold steps, and shuns its myopic vision.

The author is currently serving as a teacher in KP government.

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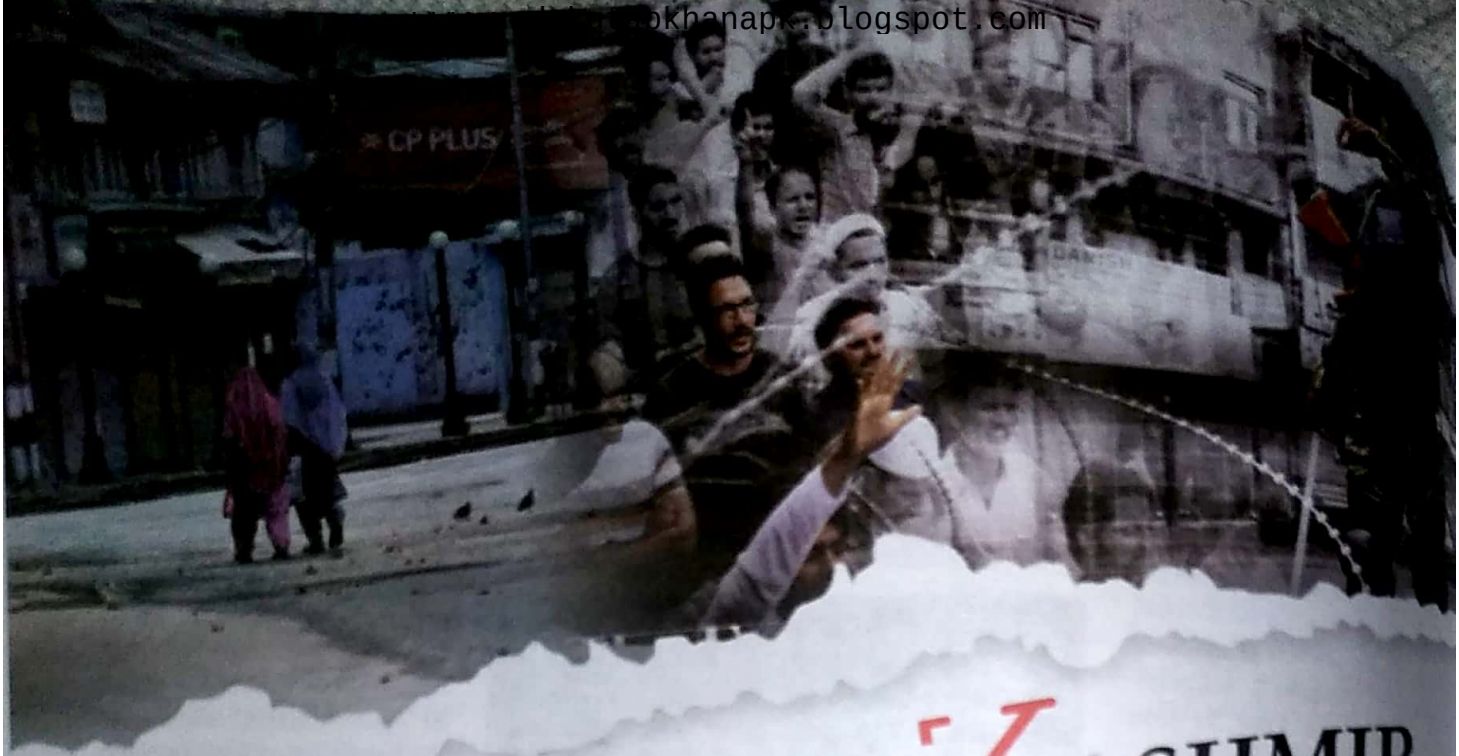

INDIAN-OCCUPIED KASHMIR

A volcano waiting to explode

It has been one year since autonomy was taken away from Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIJOK). It all started in August 2019 when India made an illegal, unconstitutional and unethical decision that the territory of Kashmir that it occupies would no longer be a semi-autonomous region, and ruled that the state of Jammu & Kashmir would be separated into two federally-run territories: Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, as of October 31, 2019. India has also taken the step to allow non-Kashmiris to own land and houses in the territory, while also reinstating military rule, as well as inflicting a complete communications ban on its people. Further to this, a curfew came down on Kashmir on August 3, put in place largely out of fear that "separatists" would launch violent protests around the first anniversary of New Delhi's annexation of the state. This all shows that there is a deep fear in the Indian government that Kashmir is getting out of their hands as all its efforts are being strongly resisted and this is the phenomenon that has given Kashmiris youth a new vigour to fight for the freedom of their homeland. What we today look in Kashmir is an eerie silence that could be the idiomatic 'calm before the storm'.

Aftab Abbasi

In Indian-Occupied Kashmir, every place is manned by Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel, with a token presence of local police. The movement of people is strictly restricted. Even journalists with press cards or curfew pass struggle to cross the roads clogged with barricades and razor wires. Prior to stripping Jammu and Kashmir of its special status last August, and bifurcating it into two union territories, the Indian government sent more than 35,000 additional central armed forces in the Occupied valley as it feared violent reprisals. But Kashmir is mostly, and strangely, quiet. Barring a few protests and clashes between youth and Indian forces here and there, there have been no major protests. And, it is something that baffles everyone. A spooky silence prevails in the valley. Trapped in lockdown, barbed wires and military barricades, an eerie silence continues to define Jammu and Kashmir's landscape.

As the official project of erasure of its geography, politics, symbols and memory continues, the Modi government labours to equate silence with 'normality' and 'acceptance'.

Stories of trauma, suffering, helplessness and monumental despair largely remain hidden from the gaze. But, rarely do memories of atrocity get buried forever. They continue to feed and fuel the volcano.

The sense of loss in Kashmir was more than symbolic as Article 370, the constitutional statute struck off on

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August 5, 2019, guaranteed its residents protections with respect to jobs, admissions in higher educational institutions and ownership of land.

By removing that safety valve, the Modi government found the levers to unilaterally amend or strike off any law without consulting the people. That process started with monumental speed in pursuit of altering the demography of J&K, which till a year ago was the only Muslim-majority state in India, but now stands demoted and divided into two union territories.

Prospects of demographic flooding

The prospects of demographic flooding are locally engendering fears of the current dispensation in New Delhi replicating the Israeli model to subjugate the Muslims, while the rest become collateral damage. Kashmir may, however, shape differently from West Bank. And, not because Kashmir's calm can be confused for reconciliation.

The present calm essentially stems from use of excessive and novel means of repression including inducement of psychological terror. The absence of civil liberties, anxieties of demographic change and a feeling of impotence could gradually inspire a rebellion.

The early signs are already visible. Though the officials maintain that 'militancy' is being decimated and several top 'rebel leaders' have been killed (among 120 killed in the first half of 2020), many continue to wield the gun. The number could well be on the rise.

Several freedom fighters killed recently were fresh recruits. A slow but steady trickle of young men are disappearing from their homes, before they are discovered to have joined the ranks of freedom fighters. For the security officials, this is not so worrying as long as the numbers are sustained through well-oiled intelligence networks and successful encounters, also because home-grown mujahideen with little or no training and weapons do not pose a major challenge.

Sense of humiliation

Yet, an explosion beyond the sustainable limit is a possibility as the sense of humiliation, anger and loss deepens. Worse, if infiltration of arms, men and material from across the border steps-up, even a low-key war coupled with the locally accumulated anger can begin to chalk a dangerous course.

Kashmir conflict is not only internal but also a territorial one, with Pakistan controlling one-third of the territory and China occupying a portion. In 1990s, Pakistan had capitalised on the existing resentment in Kashmir to heavily fund and train freedom fighters.

Indian security experts are worried about increasing number of mujahideen and the early signs of local youth turning radicalised. Unlike recent years, since the abrogation of Article 370, Indian forces have targeted many civilians (primarily outsiders and those connected with mainstream politics).

Fragile situation

Additionally, India's borders both with Pakistan and China are becoming extremely fragile. Ever since the BJP has been in power, constant border hostilities have replaced bilateral negotiations with Pakistan. In May-June this year, China's Army devoured 60 square kilometres of the erstwhile state's territory and killed 20 Indian soldiers in a hand-to-hand combat.

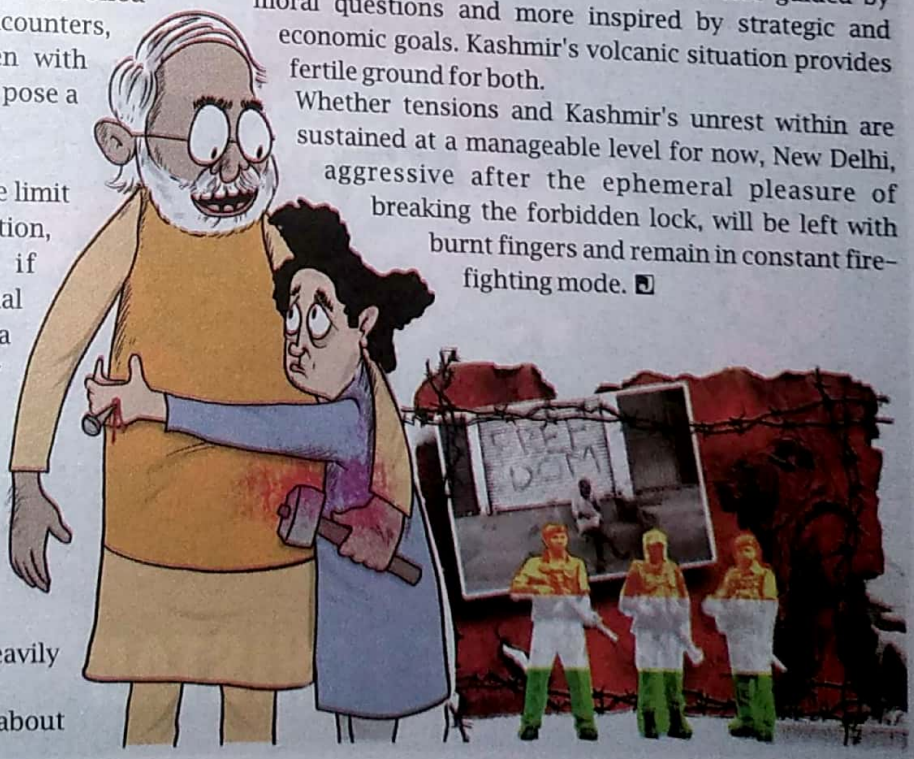
Even as the process of retreat has started for easing tensions, China is unwilling to completely budge. One of the compelling reasons for China's offensive move was last year's Kashmir action that it sees as strategically challenging. China and Pakistan are close allies and their armies enjoy some level of inter-operability which adds to Indian vulnerability.

None of the stakeholders is likely to step up the ante but border tensions are likely to assume a permanent quality. The US-China trade offensive and India's tilt towards US can complicate the issue and potentially turn a regional conflict into one of geo-strategic interests. All it would take is one reckless move within the region or one that is inspired by world leaders.

Prolonged lockdown in Kashmir, brazen violation of human rights with poor legal remedies have already tarred India's image. In several Congressional hearings and resolutions in US, UK and Europe, Modi's handling of Kashmir has been castigated.

The global tectonic shifts, however, are less guided by moral questions and more inspired by strategic and economic goals. Kashmir's volcanic situation provides fertile ground for both.

Whether tensions and Kashmir's unrest within are sustained at a manageable level for now, New Delhi, aggressive after the ephemeral pleasure of breaking the forbidden lock, will be left with burnt fingers and remain in constant fire-fighting mode. ■



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Shamsa Khalid

Since gaining independence in 1947, Pakistan has been struggling with high levels of corruption. Notwithstanding decades of efforts at improving the structural framework for effective anti-corruption initiatives, it is evident that corruption is still rampant. The efforts of successive governments to curb this menace have failed miserably. It started right from the beginning when lands and properties of those who had migrated to India after the partition of the Subcontinent were occupied illegally by the influential people and those in positions of power and authority.

Introduction

Since the country's independence in 1947, dozens of administrative measures have been taken to curb the menace of corruption in Pakistan. These measures include all types of initiatives including the purges of senior bureaucratic and political leadership, creation of new institutions, information technology enhancements, legislative interventions, stronger criminal laws, civil society initiatives, media sensitization and investigation and even the formation of new political parties. Over the years, this approach has led to the creation of over 34 federal and provincial institutions with a variety of public accountability mandates. Spanning decades, the government of Pakistan has maintained thousands of staff, which costs billions to the national exchequer. Under the gaze of this massive administrative network, however, systemic, syndicated corruption has not only thrived, but has also grown way more rampant.

One thing that evidences the ubiquity of corruption in Pakistan is that the country has regularly featured near the bottom of almost all credible International indices for corruption. For example, in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index 2014, Pakistan scored 29 out of 100 while, in 2018, it ranked 117/180 with a score of 33. In addition, World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015 found that corruption was the second most problematic factor for countries doing business in Pakistan, followed by poor infrastructure. In 2019, Pakistan dropped to 110th place in the same report.

Different forms of corruption in Pakistan

Corruption in Pakistan takes many forms.

1. Bureaucratic corruption

Bureaucratic corruption has become pervasive in the country. Even many of those bureaucrats who were tasked with elimination of corruption, themselves benefitted from this corrupt system. Paying bribes is a common practice in Pakistani society. Bribes are paid to speed up bureaucratic work, to get new passports and to avoid customs check at the airport and even to get tax clearance certificates.

Conflict of interest is the main cause of corruption in public institutions. There are numerous examples that people fail to avail themselves of a public service—that is their constitutional and legal right—while those with influence or money are provided those services instantly. Sometimes, there is a personal cost or

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risk associated with doing the right thing. Higher-ups tend to sit on the files or avoid the issue altogether. Nowadays, bureaucrats are generally avoiding taking any decision on matters involving money for fear of NAB, even though the delay might harm the common good.

2. Political corruption

Corruption in Pakistani politics has increased since the return of a democratic government after long rule of Pervez Musharraf. Several political leaders have been involved in corruption scandals. Former president Asif Ali Zardari, a son of former PM Yousaf Raza Gilani, and others are facing corruption cases in courts. Former premier Nawaz Sharif has been disqualified and jailed on corruption charges.

Patronage, too, is a common practice within Pakistani politics and it leads to lack of professionalism and partisan politicization of public institutions. Elections in Pakistan are regularly marred by allegations of rigging, military threats and candidates acting illegally.

3. Police

Police department was considered the most corrupt institution in Pakistan in global corruption barometer of 2013. Traffic police officials taking bribes in return for ignoring minor traffic violations is a common observation. Indeed, the reputation of police has created a vicious circle whereby citizens, too, try to bribe officers expecting that they will be able to avoid spending time filing out police reports if they ignore the charges in exchange for a bribe. There are also claims that police have been exploited by feudal elements in rural areas and used for torturing political opponents and rigging elections.

Judiciary

In 2011 survey, Transparency international (TI) identified judiciary as the most corrupt institution in Pakistan, alongside police. Nevertheless, with the proceedings of some high-impact corruption cases against government officials, including the PM, Supreme Court demonstrated its positive role in tackling corruption. However, the vice still present in the lower judiciary, particularly high courts and the lower courts, where people were unlawfully promoted within the judiciary.

Date	Events caused by corruption
August 6, 1990	President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dissolved parliament and sacked Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto for corruption and ineptitude
April 18, 1993	President Ghulam Ishaq Khan again dissolved parliament and sacks Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for corruption
November 1999	President Farooq Ahmed Khan Laghari dissolved parliament and sacked Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto's government again on corruption allegations
October 1999	General Pervez Musharraf stages a coup , ousting Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif citing "lack of accountability and corruption of horrendous proportions" as a key justification.
May 2000	The Supreme Court validates the coup as necessary for "accountability against those, alleged of corruption in every walk of life"
August 2003	A Swiss judge convicted former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her husband (later President Asif Ali Zardari) for laundering $12 million received in bribes from contract-seeking Swiss firms in 1995.
October 2007	Fifty-six days after Pakistan ratifie d the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the Federal Government promulgated the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) which terminated all investigations of corruption offenses by public officials prior to October 12, 1999
March 2007	President Musharraf suspended the Chief Justice of Pakistan, citing corruption and misuse of authority
July 2018	Nawaz Sharif was found guilty of corruption and sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment. His daughter and son-in-law were also convicted for corruption.

Constant disruption of the democratic process in Pakistan has prevented political parties from developing fully modern and coherent party structures; they are only personal fiefdoms. Political parties are also not required to disclose their income and expenditure to the public, although they do have to furnish before the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) the details of their assets. Interestingly, curbing corruption is a common theme within the manifestos of every major party. However, this appears to simply be an attempt to gain popularity.

Following are the some facts regarding the corruption of politicians in Pakistan.

Anti-corruption efforts

Legal Framework

1. International legislation and initiatives

In 2001, Pakistan endorsed the Asian Development Bank/Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (ADB/OECD) Anti-Corruption Initiative which helps countries establish legal and institutional framework for tackling corruption. It consists of three pillars, i.e., to develop public service integrity system, to

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strengthen anti-bribery actions and to encourage public discussion on the issue of corruption. Pakistan also ratified United Nations Convention against Corruption in 2007.

2. National legislation

There are two dedicated anti-corruption laws in Pakistan, i.e. Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947, and National Accountability Ordinance, 1999 (NAO). The NAO is the most important piece of anti-corruption legislation in Pakistan as it creates primary anti-corruption body in the country, i.e. National Accountability Bureau (NAB). Government is currently considering the Right to Information Bill which would provide citizens with more specific and wide-ranging rights. These laws would allow public to access information. In 2015, a draft law on whistle-blowing was also approved which offers whistleblowers the right to file a complaint of any wrongdoing to their department head or to the Disclosure Commissioner, who would then forward the complaint for investigation. This law also states that no action would be taken against whistleblower, and incorrect reporting would not be an offence. This law must be placed before the legislation before it can be enacted.

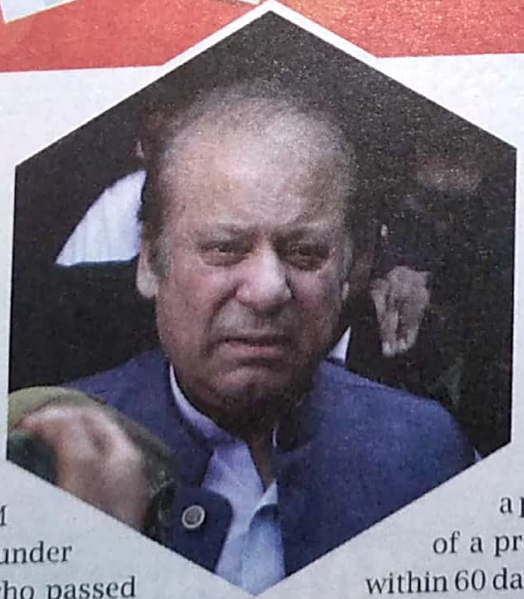
Institutional framework

Pakistan's first anti-corruption organization, the Ehtesab Cell, was established in November 1996 through Ehtesab Ordinance promulgated by the caretaker government of PM Malik Meraj Khalid and then operated under elected government of Nawaz Sharif, who passed the Ehtesab Act, 1997. In Nov. 1999, it was replaced with NAB which is charged with investigating and prosecuting corruption, as well as raising awareness. The NAB can investigate everyone in Pakistan except judiciary and military personnel, both of which have their own anti-corruption mechanisms.

The NAB chairman serves a non-extendable four-year term and can only be removed through the same procedure as adopted to remove a Supreme Court judge. This provides this office some degree of independence, although allegations of political engineering have been levelled against NAB.

The influence of military is also seen as five of the eight chairmen have previously held senior military positions. The bureau has increased its activities, handling 199,997 complaints in 2014-2015, up from 3,324 in 2007-2008. It has also had some success in prosecuting high-profile public and government officials.

Anti-corruption establishments investigate corruption committed by public officials. There are currently four provincial offices in Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. ACEs were created to complement NAB and work against public sector corruption at provincial level by holding preliminary inquiries into corruption cases.



The office of the Ombudsman deals with complaints made by individuals rather than systematically dealing with causes of corruption. It investigates and rectifies injustices caused to a person through the mal-administration of a provincial agency or government official within 60 days of receiving a complaint.

FIA was created under the FIA Act in 1974 and carries out some functions of an anti-corruption agency. The anti-

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corruption and economic crime wing of FIA has a mandate that includes economic crime and police corruption.

Recommendations

•To bring anti-corruption revolution, it is necessary to start accountability from the top. The only way to break this corruption culture is to convict high-profile corrupt figures who are proven guilty. The government should identify a few major tax-evaders, dishonest judges and high-level government officials who take bribes. Since a campaign against corruption can too often become one against the opposition, the first big fish to be fried should be from the party in power. Accountability requires a positive narrative that Pakistanis can buy into and mobilize behind. Pointing fingers and shouting loudly at law-breakers is an easy way to vent frustration—and there is no doubt that these people should be penalized.

But when justice is not served, the perception of helplessness is reinforced and momentum in the process of accountability building is lost. Instead, let's make sure we celebrate the heroes, build on areas where success is clear and work to support those who are doing the right thing.

• There is an urgent need to establish exclusive anti-corruption courts at central as well as regional level to pursue corruption-related cases, and should function according to existing laws. However, the institutional structure of the anti-corruption courts should be specially designed to ensure transparency in decision-making.

• Politicians, bureaucrats, military officers acquire funds illegally when they are in power. That's why public officials should declare their assets. This asset declaration must be examined by an effective prosecution agency that can freely and fairly investigate into their declarations.

• Corruption cases will come to light against corrupt government officers only if someone provides evidence against them. The best way to ensure this is to provide immunity from prosecution to the bribe-giver in exchange for providing solid evidence against corrupt government officials.

• There is also a need for powerful and effective national anti-corruption commission. Establishing such an agency is, perhaps, the most difficult task although Pakistan had established Ehtesab Commission in the '90s.

Conclusion

No democratic government has created a truly independent anti-corruption body in Pakistan. The main institutions, i.e. the Ehtesab Commission and the NAB, were established in the wake of the overthrow of democratically-elected governments by military rulers. The highest courts have validated the legitimacy of these organizations while later democratically-elected governments have continued to run them. The illiberal origin of anti-corruption organizations in Pakistan exposes the latent conflict between elected and non-elected groups as they attempt to use anti-corruption agencies for their own benefit. In fact, neither the military nor the government nor the judiciary has ever earnestly intended to grant full autonomy to the accountability organization. Each office has sought to bring the operation of the organization into line with its own version of accountability and institutional interests. Because it lacks independence from powerful institutions, the NAB is deeply affected by governmental change. As soon as the degree of political inclusiveness increases, the anti-corruption mechanism tends to fall back on low- and middle-rank officials and is most likely to capitalize more on voluntary returns and plea bargains, resulting in a low conviction rate. The various shifts in the activity of the NAB suggest a political use of the institution.

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IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE GDP of Pakistan

Omer Hussan Bajwa

Introduction

The history of mankind is marked with both natural and manmade calamities. Sometimes, it had to confront great disasters in the form of earthquakes, floods or droughts; while, sometimes, it has to keel in front of widespread health issues in the form of pandemics. Currently, the world is facing one of the worst pandemics in the recorded history. Covid-19, the disease caused by novel coronavirus emerged in Wuhan, China, in December last year, and engulfed the whole world within a couple of months. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 as a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Since then, the virus has disrupted the supply chains and paralyzed all the continents. It not only cost around 0.8 million lives but also left deleterious impacts on the economies worldwide. The story of Pakistan is not much different. Besides devouring the lives of more than six thousand Pakistanis, the pandemic is wreaking havoc on the economy of the country.

Covid-19 and Pakistan's GDP

In order to completely grasp the extent of impacts that the pandemic has on the GDP of Pakistan, a cursory glance over the economic situation of the country right before the pandemic is necessary. As per Pakistan Economic Survey 2019-20 (hereinafter PES), fiscal and current account deficits have been reduced by 4 and 71 percent, respectively, during July-April, FY2020. Besides this, 126 percent growth in FDI, stable credit outlook to B3 from negative by Moody's, and improved ranking in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index are some encouraging pictures from pre-pandemic time. Then, the pandemic hit the country. The rapid spread of the Covid-19 in Pakistan since February 2020 has brought economic activities to a near-halt. Undoubtedly, the economic fallout of Covid-19 depends on the effectiveness of containment measures taken by the government, the pathway of pandemic, the magnitude of supply disruption, and changes in spending patterns in the country.

Impact assessment of the pandemic on the GDP of Pakistan can be done in two dimensions.

1. Component-wise impact assessment
2. Sector-wise impact assessment

1. Component-wise impact assessment

GDP is the sum of Consumption ©, Investment (I), Government spending (G), and net exports (X-M).

$GDP = C + I + G + (X-M)$

The impact of Covid-19 on Pakistan's GDP can be assessed by analyzing its impact on different components of GDP separately.

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a. Consumption ©

Generally, consumption makes the largest component of GDP. All personal expenditures that come under the head of consumption can be categorized as durable goods, non-durable goods, and services. As per PES, considerable decline in private consumption expenditures (PCEs) from 82.9 percent to 78.5 percent of GDP have been witnessed in FY2020. Although, government's import-discouraging policies also are responsible for this decline, the direct impact of the pandemic on significantly reducing PCEs including consumption of all durable goods, non-durable goods and services cannot be ignored.

b. Investment (I)

As per PES, in FY2019, private investment as a percentage of GDP dropped from 10.29 percent to 9.98 percent while improvement in public investment was witnessed over the same period last year. Decline in private investment is likely to increase in coming months as the pandemic has impaired the liquidity position of potential investors, heightened risk perceptions and made banks show reluctance to offer loans. According to the report released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 30-40 percent drop in foreign direct investment (FDI) may be witnessed during 2020 and 2021.

c. Government spending (G)

Significant increase in the general government expenditures from 11.7 percent to 13.1 percent of GDP was witnessed during FY2020. In coming days, this share will increase further as the government is increasing expenditures on public health, strengthening social safety net programmes and giving relief packages in order to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on national economy.

d. Net exports (X-M)

The pandemic has greatly jolted both demand and supply sides around the globe. Pakistan's economy, because of disruptions in trade and increase in trade cost, may face loss in business activities. In April 2020, 55 percent and 35 percent decline in exports and imports (year-on-year), respectively, have been witnessed. The major reason behind this decline is that five major trading partners with more than 50 percent share in trade of Pakistan (China, USA, UK, Japan, and Germany) happen to be the worst-hit countries by Covid-19. However, decrease in oil prices around the globe and less consumption of goods in the domestic market is responsible for decline in imports. Besides, growing grounds of dangerous lure of self-sufficiency will impact trade of goods and services from the country.

However, the pandemic has some good impact on Pakistan's import bill as well. As the major chunk of our import bill is for the import of oil, significant decrease in its prices has reduced the import bill and, hence, contraction in current account deficit (CAD).

2. Sector-wise impact assessment

The edifice of Pakistan's economy is erected on three pillars: agriculture sector, industrial sector, and services sector. In order to assess the impacts of the pandemic on GDP, its impacts on all three pillars of economy should be analyzed. The Sub-committee on National Coordination Committee (NCC) has worked out an impact assessment of Covid-19 on the real sector of the economy.

It has been estimated that if there were no pandemic, GDP growth rate would be 3.3 percent. However, now, GDP growth rate will be negative 0.38 percent. More importantly, the negative performance of both industrial and services sector has overshadowed the growth of agriculture sector.

a. Agriculture

As per the analysis done by the Sub-committee of the National Coordination Committee for Covid-19, growth rate of agriculture sector after the pandemic will be 2.7 percent. Agriculture sector, though, has not seen major disruptions, it has faced risks due to reduced labour mobility for wheat harvesting in Punjab and impediments to wheat procurement, storage and distribution. In addition, lockdown and border closure had disruptive impacts on agriculture value chain. There has been constant threat of reduction, in or non-availability of, agricultural supplies; for instance, Kharif crop seeds, livestock feed and fertilizers. Moreover, there will be direct impact on the people connected with forward and backward linkages of agriculture produce.

b. Industrial sector

According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, significant impact has been observed on manufacturing sector, particularly large-scale manufacturing and small-scale manufacturing. As per PES, industrial sector growth rate has been estimated at -2.64 percent as the growth rate of mining and quarrying sector, large-scale manufacturing

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sector, and small-scale industrial sector has been estimated at -8.82, -7.78, and 1.52 percent, respectively.

c. Services sector

Like industrial sector, services sector, too, particularly in wholesale and retail trade and transport sectors, has witnessed significant impact. Negative 0.59 percent growth rate has been recorded in the services sector. Wholesale and retail trade sector and transport, storage and communication sectors have growth rates of -3.42 and -7.13 percent.

Following points categorically explain the impact of the pandemic on the services sector.

- In order to reduce the spread of Covid-19, the government resorted to social distancing policies. These policies reduced activities requiring proximity of people. Resultantly, many areas of services sector have come to their knees.
- Provision of healthcare for non-Covid illnesses is currently facing disruptions and closures. This includes primary healthcare services such as routine immunization and general child healthcare.
- Covid-19 has directly impacted 42 million school-going children. This situation will exacerbate risks and vulnerabilities of an already weak education system and steepen illiteracy levels in the country.
- During FY2020 (July-February), gross earnings of Pakistan Railways grew by 8.4 percent. However, after the pandemic outbreak, Pakistan Railways incurred a loss of around Rs. 10 billion in just two months.
- Achieving revenue targets of both tax and non-tax segments would be challenging in the short run. After the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, an average negative growth rate of 13.4 percent was recorded during March 2020 and April 2020 as compared to last year. FBR tax collection is expected to remain at Rs 3.9 trillion during FY2020 against the target of Rs 4.8 trillion.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has jolted the capital market. After the outbreak, capital began flowing out of the Pakistan stock market and the index plunged to 27228.8 points from 38,450 points. However, the government's stimulus package has provided relief to investors and restored their confidence in the market.
- According to preliminary estimates conducted by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), the Covid-19 pandemic can have adverse impact on employment-generation during the last quarter of 2019-20. In case of limited restrictions, about 1.4 million jobs will be lost, and, in case of a complete shutdown, employment loss could reach to 12.3 million and

18.53 million people. Loss of workers would be the maximum in wholesale and retail trade, followed by manufacturing, construction and transport. Same situation has happened in the USA, where unemployment rate stood at 3.5 percent in February 2020. However, as per the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, current unemployment rate is at 14.7 percent, the highest since the Great Depression. It has been estimated that unemployment will not reach pre-pandemic level till 2024.

- The growth in global remittances flows is expected to fall as the UN's work agency warns that hundreds of millions of people could be left without work due to the impact of Covid-19. This will impact Pakistan's GDP severely.
- The pandemic has significantly dropped travel services thus has impacted tourism industry of the country greatly. Hotels and restaurants are among the hardest hit, and they may lay off up to 90% of their workforce, which is 0.63 million vulnerable employees. It currently employs 1.97% of the country's total labour force.
- There will be a shift from public to private transport. In Pakistan, a major chunk of population uses already ramshackle public transport. Unless the government gives any bailout package to them, severe cuts in jobs and services will become inevitable.
- Owing to increase in public spending due to fiscal stimulus package, budget deficit is expected to exceed the target of 7.5 percent of GDP and may go up to 9.4 percent of GDP.

There is constant fear of low growth in years to come. As

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per one of the estimates, next year, GDP growth rate of Pakistan will be below 2 percent. However, a second round of the pandemic could further threaten macroeconomic stability; bring liquidity issues in businesses; dampen global trade by decreasing exports and remittances inflows; and bring higher debt accumulation and less financing for development projects.

Government steps to reduce Covid-19 impacts

Following steps have been taken by the government to reduce economic impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- A Rs 1.24 trillion relief package including various incentives for export-oriented industries and direct assistance to poor segment of the society including a relief package of Rs 144 billion to provide immediate cash relief of Rs 12,000 to 12 million poor families under Ehsaas programme.
- The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has reduced policy rate by cumulative 625 bps to 7 percent in five consecutive decisions between March 17th and June 30th.
- Similarly, the SBP has introduced "Temporary Economic Refinance Facility," "Refinance Facility for Combating Covid-19" and "Refinance Scheme for Payment of Wages and Salaries to the Workers and Employees of Business Concerns" which are aimed at facilitating businesses to remain afloat during the crisis.
- The government has resorted to the imposition of 'smart lockdown' instead of 'complete lockdown' just in order to save the marginalized segments of the society from the economic blow of the lockdown and to keep the wheel of the economy moving.
- The government has secured numerous assistance packages from international organizations. For instance, the IMF has given a one-year relief to Pakistan and has provided US$1.386 billion under the Rapid Financing Instrument to address the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Besides this, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank, too, have given aid packages to Pakistan.

Recommendations

Following are some recommendation for improving the economic landscape of the country in the post-pandemic era.

- Digitalize rapidly the supply chains across various industries and agriculture as the pandemic has exposed vulnerabilities of conventional supply chains.
- Diversify export base as the virus has highlighted detrimental impacts of overreliance on certain export areas. More export markets should be explored.
- Invest in research and development, as most countries are thinking about having self-sufficiency in certain areas to save themselves from detrimental impacts caused by disruption of supply chains, Pakistan should follow suit, especially in the areas of health, medicine and related equipments. Such measures will save the economy from any future pandemic.
- Focus on the availability of reliable data and data banks as it will help in monitoring the effectiveness of policy interventions.
- Encourage public-private partnership for plugging the loopholes exposed by the pandemic.
- Expedite 5G deployment as it will enable the industrial cooperation in technology. Resultantly, in the future, industries will be more resilient to any such untoward circumstances that the world is experiencing right now.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 outbreak is a human tragedy that has affected hundreds of thousands of people globally. It has cast adverse impacts on the economies around the world, including Pakistan's. In the current situation, the government has dual challenge; to contain the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic and to mitigate the economic losses in order to protect the most vulnerable. Although the current situation exposes flawed policies of previous governments, yet it is never too late to tread the right path.

The author is currently serving as Assistant Director, Pakistan Institute of Trade and Development.

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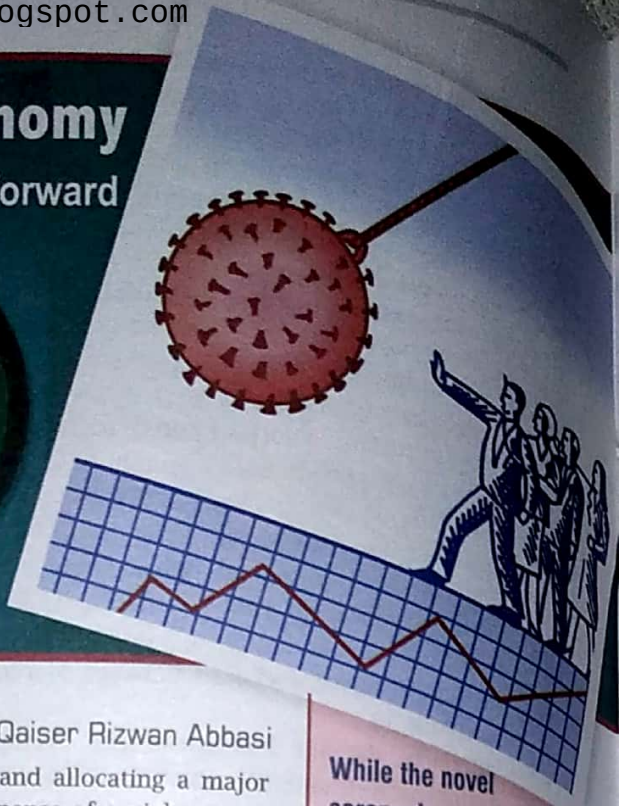
Pakistan's Post-pandemic Economy

Challenges and the way forward



Qaiser Rizwan Abbasi

Since Pakistan has been prioritizing defence expenditure and allocating a major chunk of its GDP to non-development spending at the expense of social sectors, particularly healthcare infrastructure, it has failed miserably to tackle disastrous virus and save demographics effectively and efficiently. What is more disturbing to note is that the pandemic has exposed economic and governance-led fault lines, leading to dire socioeconomic implications for the country.

During the current fiscal year, i.e. FY2020-21, Pakistan is likely to bear an economic loss of approximately Rs2.5 trillion with fall of remittances by $5billion because of unemployed foreign workers; and declining total revenue generation by $6 billion owing to the almost-dysfunctional Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). A major part of these losses can be attributed to the subsequent lockdown imposed by the governments of the federating units though unclear, inconsistent and distorted stance adopted by PTI-led federal government which was disturbingly surrounded by debate: "Either to save lives or livelihoods."

One of the destructive impacts of lockdown is shutting down of business operations which resulted in huge layoffs. For instance, Karachi, a metropolitan city and the country's economic hub, houses 2700 factories out of which merely 45—those in food and pharmaceutical sectors—were operating after the imposition of lockdown. This led to a devastating impact on the supply chain and daily-wagers—the most vulnerable segment of the population—who, therefore, were increasingly finding it hard to make ends meet.

While central and provincial governments are gradually easing restrictions, the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that miscalculated move aimed at economic recovery without considering potential resurge of the virus could lead to irreparable and untenable damage to the economy and all its sectors.

However, not only Covid-19 is a daunting challenge to the global community, but locust swarms also pose a significant threat to food security. Oxfam, a multinational charitable organization which seeks to eliminate poverty, has recently unveiled a grim picture of food insecurity by saying that 12000 people worldwide could lose their lives every day due to hunger associated with pandemic by the end of 2020. This is because the global food supply has been disturbed greatly, restricting adequate food supply to the impoverished masses.

Keeping this sorry state of affairs in mind, it is pertinent to mention that Pakistan's already dwindling agriculture sector faces an existential crisis due to locust attacks, making it unable for the country to fulfil the needs of the burgeoning population. Along with that, the halt in trading activities and lack of imports of essential food items have also severely compounded food security challenges for Pakistan. This has led to an increase in the prices of food items, followed by short supply. However, many fear that the inaccessibility of affordable food items will certainly worsen socioeconomic conditions of the poverty-ridden people, forcing them to

While the novel coronavirus-caused Covid-19 pandemic is causing massive economic disruption across the globe, Pakistan's fragile economy is confronting an unprecedented economic crisis. Before the outbreak of the pandemic here, the economy of Pakistan was reeling under vices like worrisome joblessness, soaring inflation, rising food insecurity, widening fiscal deficit and, above all, plummeting gross domestic product (GDP). Now, the outbreak of pandemic has multiplied these challenges and is making Pakistan head towards yet another irreversible economic disaster.

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engage in criminal activities, resulting in social disorder.

On the other hand, the services sector of Pakistan—the largest contributor to GDP—has witnessed enduring damage since the Covid-19 penetrated the country. Some of the most affected sectors are tourism, sports, education, restaurants, travel and aviation. As people have been maintaining social distancing and quarantines to prevent the spread of the virus, so they are not engaging in travelling and entertainment activities. All this has limited Pakistan's potential to generate much-needed revenue to combat Covid-19 and govern the country.

Covid-19 has also caused demand and supply shocks which have added to an already immense pressure on the external sector. Export volume has been on a downward trajectory by 3.9% with declining imports by 16.2%. The latest Economic Survey indicated that factors instrumental in falling exports are currency overvaluation, energy outages, lack of competitiveness and reduction in international commodity prices. Moreover, it was reported that major export destinations of Pakistan, i.e. China, the USA, and Middle Eastern countries, have either cancelled or deferred their orders. Confined operations at Karachi Port have added fuel to the fire, causing a huge decline in exports.

Considering numerous ills ailing Pakistan's economy, the state of Pakistan needs to find out, and put in place, a workable and robust policy framework to kickstart and turn around the economy in a highly effective manner. A series of endeavours to revamp economy may include:

1. Boosting up the construction sector

The construction sector plays a vital role in the economy. What is significant to note is that this sector is greatly labour-intensive, employing millions of working-age people and daily-wagers. Over 40 sectors are, directly or indirectly, connected with the construction industry such as brick, cement, steel and wood industry.

For that, Prime Minister Imran Khan has announced a much-needed revival package for the construction and housing sector. This will certainly not only help lower down jobless-ness but will also increase the demand for the products of industries that contribute to the constructor industry.

Together with this, tax amnesty has been offered to encourage the business community to invest in building projects without being subject to scrutiny or investigation. A subsidy of Rs30 billion has also been announced for the low-cost housing, aimed at providing affordable housing to the marginalized people.

2. Expanding social safety net programme

Given the deteriorating economic conditions, the PTI-led government has come up with the relief package under Ehsaas Programme, which is a step in the right direction. The package of Rs1.2 trillion was announced with a cash transfer of Rs12,000 to deserving households for 4 months. As many as 12 million households have received the said amount, enabling them to ensure survival during these hard times.

Hafiz A. Pasha, a noted economist and former federal finance minister, while painting the sorry state of the economy, has argued that an unconditional cash transfer scheme was a much-needed effort which should be expanded and continued for an indefinite period as approximately 50% of Pakistan's population is expected to fall below the poverty line due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. Facilitate SMEs

Looming recession and a threat of huge unemployment compelled the incumbent government to allocate Rs100 billion for the promotion and facilitation of SMEs. Young, especially women, entrepreneurs are encouraged to start up their own business while seeking an easy loan facility offered by the government. This way, people who lack financial and economic resources to establish their firms would be able to get lucrative loans.

However, this is not only what corporate entities require. Investors need to be attracted through a variety of structural reforms such as eliminating bureaucratic bottlenecks, building business-friendly infrastructure, financial and non-financial incentives, and so on.

4. Reducing interest rate

Amidst unfavourable ramifications of Covid-19, the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) had to come into play and adopt multiple measures. One of the important steps taken by SBP was reducing the policy rate from 13.25 percent to 9 percent—it was further reduced to 7 percent later. This was certainly a welcome development, as a higher interest rate was a major hurdle for investors and business professionals in doing business in the country. With the GDP growth rate declining, policies of credit expansion to sustain employment in firms are, indeed, a need of the hour. Not only this, but lower interest rates also attract foreign direct investment (FDI) which is a perfect recipe in the case of Pakistan. An inflow of 'hot money' in the country will flourish business activity and generate economic opportunities for the unemployed youth. Strategies are required to create a favourable environment for global investors.

Conclusion

A sound economy is indispensable for national security, strategic relations with countries, and domestic socio-political fabric of the country. As the economic downfall of Pakistan is quite severe, the country ought to initiate tough economic and political reforms to make its economy move towards stability. Negotiating imperative bailouts from friendly nations as well as multi-national financial lending platforms, i.e. IMF and the World Bank, will offer an economic stimulus to Pakistan's economy. Last but not least, global cooperation to revitalize world economies is what is needed the most in the post-Covid-19 world.

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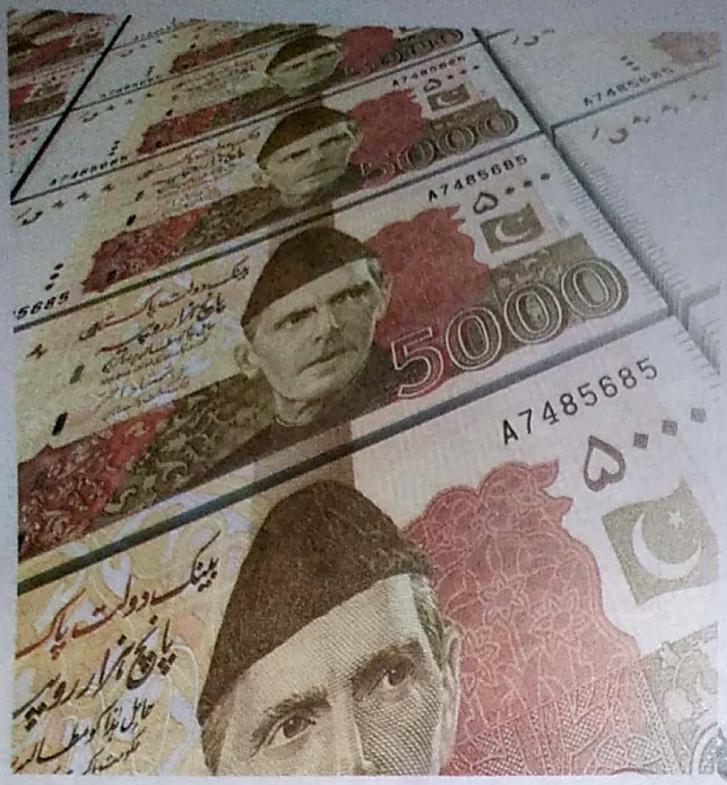

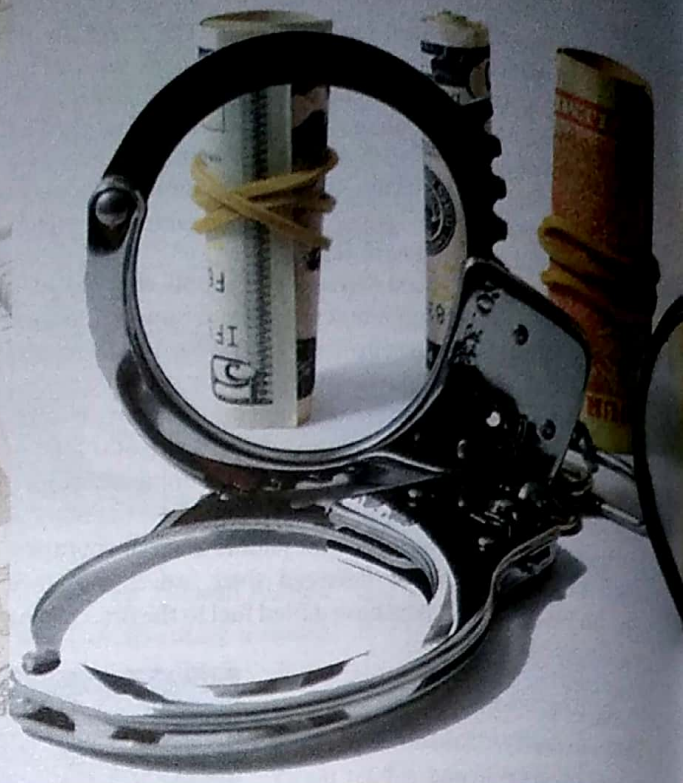

Tax crimes as predicate offences under the Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2010

Bilal Hassan

In order to further strengthen the existing AML Act 2010, the government has enacted the Anti-Money Laundering (Amendment) Act, 2020 (AMLA Act 2020), which received the assent of the President on 21 February 2020, and published in the official gazette of 27 February 2020. Under the AML Act 2020, monetary fine for the offence of money laundering has been increased from Rs 1 million to Rs 5 million and the reporting entities are required to maintain and keep record of suspicious transaction reports (STRs) and currency transaction reports (CTRs) for up to 10 years, instead of existing period of up to 5 years. The AMLA Act 2020 has increased the period for provisional attachment of property involved in money laundering from 90 days to 180 days, which can be extended for up to another 180 days by the competent court. Term of imprisonment for failure to comply with the suspicious transaction reporting requirements or providing false information has been enhanced from 3 years to 5 years, besides increasing the monetary fine from Rs 100,000 to Rs 500,000. The term of imprisonment for disclosure of

Income tax, sales tax and excise duty are important inland taxes of Pakistan due to their significant contribution in the overall federal tax receipts. However, actual collection of these taxes is less than the potential, and a significant tax gap estimated within these taxes is largely due to massive tax evasion. Tax evasion under the Income Tax Ordinance, 2001 (ITO 2001) has recently been included as a predicate offence under the Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2010 (AML Act 2010). Similarly, certain crimes in the Sales Tax Act, 1990 (Act 1990) and the Federal Excise Act, 2005 (Act 2005) are also included in the list of predicate offences under the AML Act 2010. Such tax crimes as predicate offences will be investigated and prosecuted under the provisions of the AML Act 2010, which imposes heavy monetary fines and imprisonment in addition to forfeiture of property involved in money laundering for the offence of crimes.

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information prohibited from disclosing has also been extended from 3 years to 5 years, besides increasing the monetary fine from Rs 500,000 to Rs 2 million.

Since tax evasion as predicate offence will attract heavy fines, imprisonment or both, understanding which actions under the ITO 2001, the Act 1990 and the Act 2005 constitute predicate offence will be of utmost importance for taxable persons, tax authorities and others concerned.

Giving knowingly and deliberately false statement in verification in any return or any other document submitted under the ITO 2001 will be predicate offence provided tax sought to be evaded is Rs 10 million or more.

Another predicate offence under the ITO 2001 is concealment of income or furnishing of inaccurate particulars of income that involves tax evasion up to or greater than Rs 10 million.

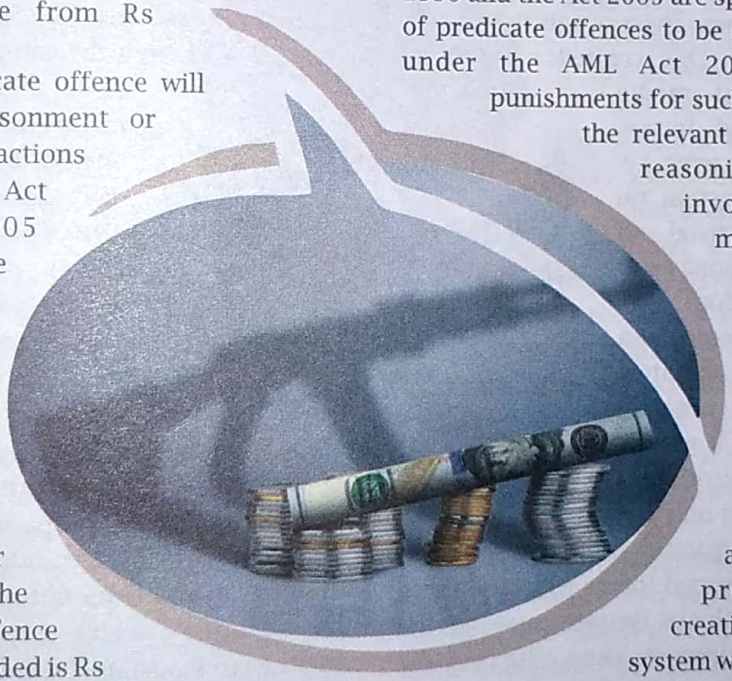
Knowingly or recklessly using false National Tax Number (NTN) in a return or in any other prescribed document where tax sought to be evaded is Rs 10 million or more also constitutes a predicate offence.

A person who knowingly and wilfully aids, abets, assists, incites or induces any other person to commit an offence under the ITO 2001 which result in tax evasion of Rs 10 million or more, will also be held liable for an offence that is included in the list of predicate offences.

Certain offences under section 33 of the Act of 1990 are included in the list of predicate offences. These include submission of false or forged documents to tax authorities; destruction, alteration, mutilation or falsification of the records, including sales tax invoice; knowingly or fraudulently making false statement, false declaration and false representation; giving false information or issuing or using forged or false documents; and committing or causing to commit or attempting to commit the sales tax fraud or abetting or conniving in commissioning of sales tax fraud.

Inter alia, the offences under section 19(3) of the Act 2005 included in the list of predicate offences are illegally removing, storing, keeping or withdrawing of goods; conveying, removing, depositing or dealing with goods to defraud the government of the excise duty; evading or attempting to evade excise duty fraudulently; claiming, taking or availing adjustment of inadmissible excise duty; and manufacturing dutiable goods in contravention of the Act 2005 or rules made thereunder.

Why certain crimes mentioned in the ITO 2001, the Act 1990 and the Act 2005 are specifically included in the list of predicate offences to be investigated and prosecuted under the AML Act 2010 despite considerable punishments for such crimes already provided in the relevant tax laws? It entails simple reasoning of punishing crimes involving money laundering more severely and ruthlessly.



Money laundering is a curse for the economy and society, especially when money is laundered outside the country. It directly reduces money in the economic system that implies less money will be available for investment projects. Ultimately job-creation capacity of the economic system will get curtailed. Thus, money laundering hurts economic growth in more than one way and ultimately hampers the welfare of the society. Moreover, money laundering deteriorates democratic system.

The writer serves as Additional Director Intelligence and Investigation (IR), Federal Board of Revenue.

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PAKISTAN'S WAR WITHIN

Belittling ISPR's role in fifth generation warfare is perplexing

Mustansar Hussain Tasir

Pakistan is faced with hybrid threats from its inside.

The release of a new song "*Ja Chor Day Meri Waadi*" (Leave My Valley Alone) by ISPR, to express solidarity with Kashmiris of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIJOK), on August 05, 2020, which was observed as '*Youm-e-Istehsal-Kashmir*', was given an ugly twist by the so-called 'digital warriors'. This created a storm of controversy on all social media networks. Pakistan's armed forces, especially its public relations wing, i.e. ISPR, were ridiculed for inaction on IIJOK and being engaged in trivial and useless actions like making songs and videos. No Socratic wisdom was required to discern many memes and messages that were being deliberately circulated to flare up this negative campaign against the army. It was as clear as day that the whole episode was purposefully launched to not only belittle the timely-released, very impactful solidarity song but also to tarnish the image of armed forces which, to these elements, is practically toothless despite gnawing the lion's share of the national budget. They criticized the army for resorting to 'trivial and fruitless' acts in their 'efforts' to support the oppressed Kashmiris. This offensive campaign was very much organized and massive enough to achieve its goals to a great extent and the anthem could not garner popularity and impact akin to that the earlier one '*Sangbaaz*' received.

Similarly, Prime Minister Imran Khan's landmark step to include the whole region of Kashmir in Pakistan's new political map "to reflect the aspirations of the people" was given the same negative shade, and a similar assault was launched on social media to disparage the incumbent government's efforts for Kashmiris' right to self-determination that is ensured under the UNSC resolutions and international law. The information war was so shrewdly waged that the historical step got somewhat eclipsed. Although the campaign was not that sophisticated, PTI's overall image of ineptness in governance matters made this social media drive a success in making the PM's decision debatable.

Again, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi's scathing statement against Saudi Arabia for its unwillingness to convene a meeting of OIC's Council of Foreign Ministers on Kashmir issue, was given undue hype and was projected negatively so as to create a rift between the two brotherly countries. Additionally, sectarian flavour was also added to widen the scope of controversy.

A closer look at this episode reveals that there were some digital warriors from outside the country, majority with fake identities, behind this hullabaloo. Although most of them were Pakistanis, some were "the dissidents," some from media and many from parties considered PTI's opponents. Many commoners who may have no specific agenda were just carried away with the wind, probably due to their lack of sense about the long-term impact of their liking or sharing of such posts. Knowingly or unknowingly, these keyboard fighters have dented Pakistan's interests. This is not the first time that such social media

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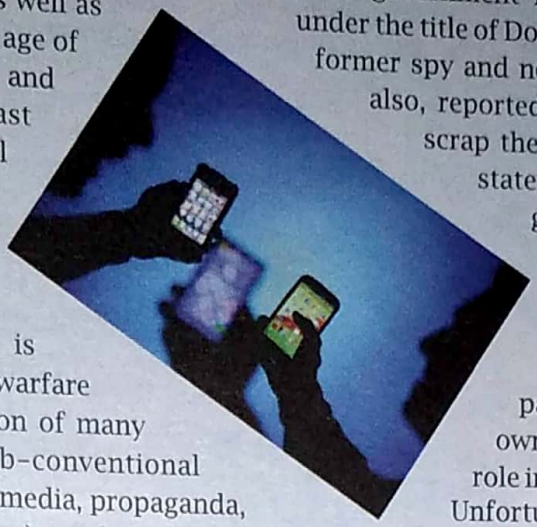
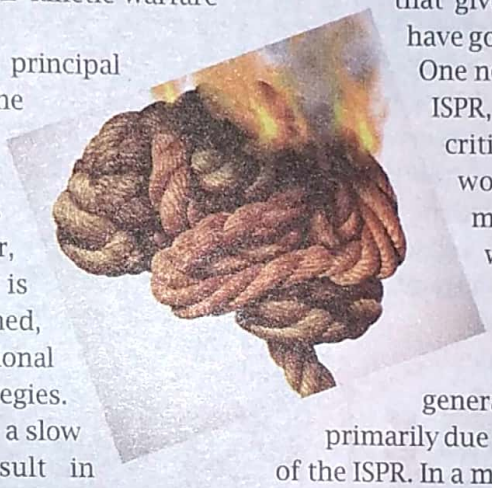
campaigns have inflicted damage to the country's image, but this has now become a matter of routine.

These people are playing their part in a systematic war which is known as hybrid or fifth generation warfare. This covert war has been launched by India to malign Pakistan and to maculate its image as well as national narrative on Kashmir. In this age of Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) and nuclearization, when there is least probability of direct or conventional confrontation between two South Asian archrivals, hybrid methods to blow damage to the adversary's interests seem most relevant, and feasible as well. This type of war is actually the need of the time. Hybrid warfare could be a combination or integration of many conventional, unconventional, sub-conventional methods, including, inter alia, use of media, propaganda, psychological operations (Psy-ops), political and diplomatic means, espionage and intelligence sources, cyber and information tools, patronizing secessionist movements, creating sectarian rifts, supporting terrorist outfits, and many other kinetic and non-kinetic warfare techniques.



In this kind of war, although enemy's principal objective is known, its identity and the tactics it uses are not clear. When the target nation successfully safeguards one of its fault lines, the enemy creates another. In this new kind of war, sensitivities are hurt, national morale is bruised, national narrative is blemished, national repute is stained and national honour is pricked with various strategies. These hybrid methods of war work like a slow poison and the assaults may result in mammoth losses of the target nation's vital nation al interests.



In India-Pakistan context, the history of indirect war can be traced back to early 50s when India started its secret involvement in West Pakistan till its secession in 1971 as independent state of Bangladesh. Indian leadership and policymakers have actually inherited these shenanigans, schemes of hypocrisy, chicanery, and treachery as part of their foreign policy and war strategy from their political and philosophical guru, Chanakya. The techniques and lessons taught by Chanakya in his ancient treatise 'Arthashastra' on statecraft, foreign and economic policy and military strategy, have always been part and parcel of modern India's foreign policy formulation and its global and regional political and strategic endeavours.

India started exploring and employing these modes against Pakistan particularly after deterrence started working in the wake of 1998 overt nuclearization of the both nations. With the failure of India's risky, impractical, low-intensity conflict strategy, i.e. Cold Start, India has pooled maximum resources into this new type of war. Modi government invigorated these hybrid campaigns under the title of Doval Doctrine, named after Ajit Doval, a former spy and now India's National Security Advisor, also, reportedly, the main architect of scheme to scrap the special status of IIJOK. Many of the statements of Ajit Doval and many Indian generals are on record whereby they expressed their resolve to 'punish' Pakistan for its many 'sins' against India's national interests. In this regard, Modi government has paid huge sums of money to media owners and anchorpersons to play their role in this 'sacred' cause.

Unfortunately, many Pakistanis have been used as pawns in this indirect Indian war agai nst their own country's interests. They are unaware that they have actually sided with the enemy. These youngsters should have been the soldiers of the soil that gives them everything, but they seem to have gone on the wrong side of the history.

One needs no extra lenses to witness that the ISPR, which these social media warriors are criticizing for its new song, have been working efficiently to thwart these manoeuvres of India's mainstream as well as social media propaganda assaults. Even Indian's senior military leadership confessed that Pakistan has been outperforming India in this generational warfare. This could happen primarily due to the tireless and well thought-out role of the ISPR. In a meeting of retired commanders of Indian military, Lt. Gen. (retd) Syed Ata Hasnain, who had served in Indian Army for 40 years, had to utter a very bold confessional statement about the ISPR's matchless professional work in its war of information with India. The General said; "I give full marks to Pakistan for the manner in which it has played out the information strategy. The ISPR has done an outstanding work for Pakistan."

This is the only reason why India's major focus is on ISPR and monitors closely every move of the organization. ISPR is the first line of defence in this war of information and narratives. It has been successfully defeating the enemies outside but now, painfully, its major challenges are not from outside, but from within.

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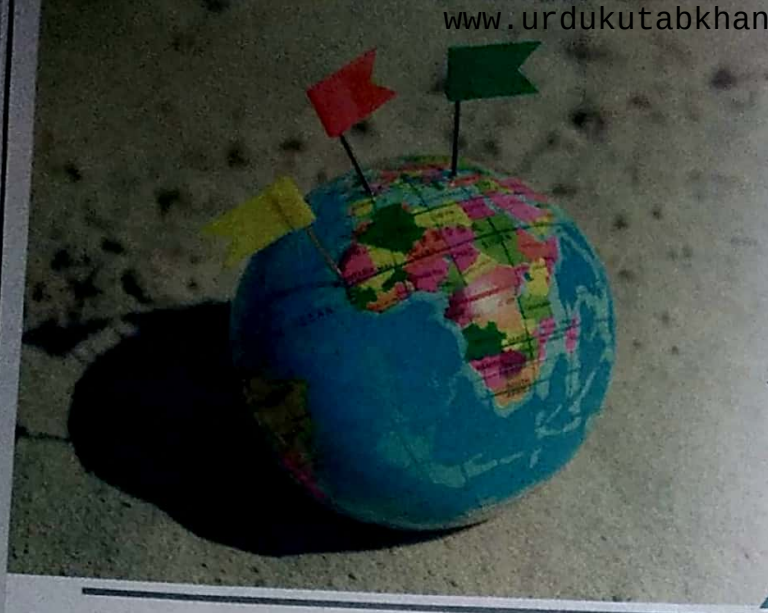

With the organic development of modern states, one of the most debated ideas among individuals and at intellectual platforms of regional and international politics is international security. The concept of international security has always been highlighted by the social scientists in multiple disciplines of social sciences such as international relations, political science, foreign policy and diplomacy. Since European renaissance that led to Industrial Revolution and multi-polar politics, the concept of international security has been fervently discussed among political scientists, academia and scholars of international relations, as well as the state actors of developed, developing and under-developed countries. After the end of the Second World War, the discipline of international peace and security has been increasingly taken as a subject by varsities around the globe.

International Security and World Politics

Mian Majid Ali Afzal

For almost a century, discussions on international security remained controversial due to the bipolar world order as both superpowers in this system formed alliances in the form of organizations and bilateral agreements, and also signed the treaties such as NATO, Warsaw Pact and NAM. No doubt, a clear difference was observed during this period as there were no incidents of traditional war; however, proxy war phenomenon replaced the traditional warfare. This new type of warfare is considered less harmful for the parties as compared to a traditional war. However, this development proved consequential for the communist bloc as its patron, i.e. the Soviet Union, got dismembered, and replaced with what we today know as the Russian Federation. Due to this change, the world order also transformed to become unipolar. But this setting also brought with it new threats, also known as non-traditional security threats, due to belligerence of some states.

The non-traditional security threats included things like global warming and its impact in the form of manmade or natural disasters, anti-globalization, terrorism by non-state actors, proxies, human rights violations by people or states, epidemics, transnational organized crime network, mafias, money-laundering, financial terrorism, ethnic issues of and among societies, drug addiction and transportation and clashes of interest between or among the states over the economic interest or territorial integration. All in all, from the individual's security to state and from state to regional and international, and, then, the security of space gradually fell within the domain of international security.

A major threat to international society is anti-globalization in which major states can rise up against each other, e.g. US-China trade war, Brexit. The second daunting threat in this context is hyper-nationalism in different countries which is reflected by a radical mindset, e.g. ELAM in Cyprus, Shiv Sena in India and VOX in Spain.

The third threat to international security can be the isolationism which is increasingly becoming a threat to internationalism. In this category, individuals who are working as political actors in their countries like Justin Amash and Rand Paul in the USA. The fourth major threat is hyper-religionism based on the use of religion in national and international politics like ISIS, Al-Qaeda, TTP, Pan Malaysian Islamic Party and Buddhism-based political movement in Myanmar.

To maintain and improve the international security, it is important for the United Nations, WTO, ICJ, World Bank, IMF, and other regional and international organizations to adopt methods of consensus-based decisions; otherwise, world politics ultimately will head towards another power competition that will be problematic for the international peace.

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STOCKPILING GOLD?

TOP 10 COUNTRIES WITH MOST GOLD RESERVES

Magazine desk

Gold has long been viewed as the ultimate financial asset, and never more so than during times of financial crisis such as the current one caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Although a number of countries no longer use the 'Gold Standard', the yellow metal is being stockpiled by central banks around the world, adding 650 tonnes to their reserves in the last year. They are doing so because it provides stability as is not impacted by political changes or economic shocks, plus it's a liquid asset which means it can be converted to cash if and when needed.

In times of uncertainty, gold has long been touted as a 'safe haven' - and never more so than during times of financial crisis like the one the Covid-19 pandemic has triggered worldwide. While the 'gold standard' was abandoned in the 1970s, the metal is still held by central banks across the world for its ability to provide stability: it is perceived as less prone to political or economic volatility and can be converted to cash if necessary. Even before the pandemic, the global economy was showing warning signs and many countries had begun to hoard more gold. Central banks added 650 tonnes to their reserves in 2019, the second highest shift in 50 years, after 656 tonnes were added in 2018. Before the 2008 financial crisis, central banks were net sellers of gold worldwide for decades.

So which nations have stockpiled the most gold?

According to data compiled by the World Gold Council, here's a list of the top 10 countries holding the highest official gold reserves:

1. United States

Tonnes: 8,133.5 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 78.9

The USA has almost as much gold as the next three countries combined, and has the highest gold allocation as a percentage of its foreign reserves at almost 79 percent. Over half its reserves (4,583 tonnes valued at $236.4 billion) are held at the US Bullion Depository at Fort Knox.

2. Germany

Tonnes: 3,363.6 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 75.2

Between 2012 and 2017, Germany repatriated most of its massive reserve - a total of 674 tonnes - from Paris and New York to Frankfurt.

3. Italy

Tonnes: 2,451.8 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 70.8

Italy's gold is not owned by the state, but by Banca d'Italia, and held in vaults in Rome and at the Swiss National Bank, the Federal Reserve in New York and the Bank of England.

4. France

Tonnes: 2,436 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 65

Much of France's gold was acquired during the 1950s and 1960s, and is held in vaults under the Banque de France in Paris. France's central bank has sold little of its gold over the past several years.

5. Russia

Tonnes: 2,299.2 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 22.6

The Russian Central Bank has been the largest buyer of gold for the past 7 years, and its reserves have increased by more than 400 tonnes in the past 2 years alone. In 2017, it bought 224 tonnes of bullion to diversify away from the US dollar, as its relationship with the West has grown chilly since the annexation of Crimea in 2014.

6. China

Tonnes: 1,948.3

Percent of foreign reserves: 3.4

China is the world's largest producer, accounting for 12 percent of global mine production. It is also the largest consumer, as local demand for the yellow metal has been boosted by a growing middle class.

7. Switzerland

Tonnes: 1,040 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 6.5

While placed seventh, Switzerland owns the largest reserves of gold per capita. Much of its gold trading is done with Hong Kong and China.

8. Japan

Tonnes: 765.2 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 3.1

As the world's third largest economy, Japan's central bank has been one of the most aggressive practitioners of quantitative easing - in 2016 it lowered interest rates below zero - which has helped fuel a greater demand for gold.

9. India

Tonnes: 654.9 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 7.5

India is the second largest consumer of gold and one of the most reliable drivers of global demand, as the majority of the precious metal is imported. India's festivals and wedding season, which runs from October to December, has historically been a boon for the trade.

10. Netherlands

Tonnes: 612.5 **Percent of foreign reserves:** 70.9

Back in 2014, the Netherlands repatriated 20 percent of its gold reserves from the vaults of the New York Fed to Amsterdam. In 2019, the Dutch National Bank called the yellow metal an "anchor of trust" and "perfect piggy bank" for the financial system in preparation for economic doomsday.

Pakistan

Pakistan is at 44th place on this list with total gold reserves of 64.6 tonnes. Pakistan's gold reserves were reported at US$3.674 billion in Jun 2020. This records an increase from the previous figure of US$3.592 billion for May 2020.

International Monetary Fund

When the IMF was founded in 1944 it was decided that 25% of initial quota subscriptions and subsequent quota increases were to be paid in gold. That remains the main source of the 2,814 tonnes of gold it holds. The coronavirus pandemic boosted the value of the IMF's gold reserves by $19.3 billion in just 3 months (January to April 2020). The IMF has sold gold in the past to help poor nations with huge debts, but there are criteria that countries need to meet for such aid to be released.

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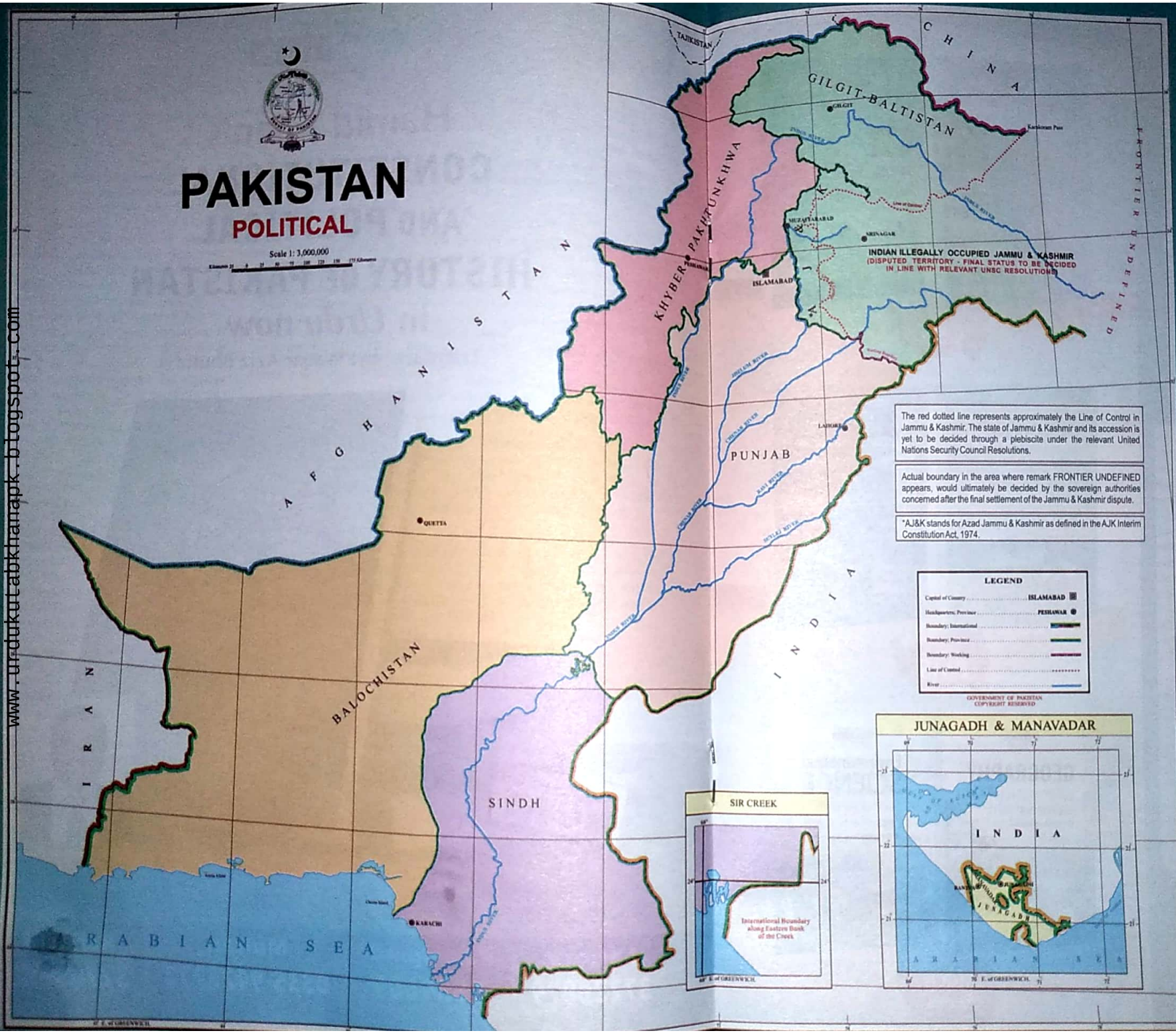

The New Political Map of Pakistan

On 04 August, Prime Minister Imran Khan unveiled a "new political map" of Pakistan that includes Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJ&K) as part of the country's territory for the first time. The move came a day before Youm-e-Istehsal, which was observed on August 05 to mark the first anniversary of India launching demographic apartheid in IIOJK by dividing it into three parts and placing the region under military siege since then. The new official map would henceforth be used in schools and colleges across the country. A 'new political map' of Pakistan was need of the hour in the midst of Indian controversial unilateral decisions in the region. With updated map, Pakistan clearly defines Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) as "disputed territory"; rejects Indian abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A that revoked J&K's semi-autonomous status; and demands United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions on J&K to be implemented in their true letter and spirit.

According to the new map, the final settlement of the J&K dispute will be in accordance with the UNSC resolutions. In this respect, the remaining area is clearly indicated as Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJ&K). Second, the new map finally shows the long due development with the extension of the Line of Control (LoC) beyond NJ980420 to the Karakoram Pass, separating Pakistan and India's position in the context of Actual Ground Position Line. Third, Pakistan rejects Indian claim on the western bank with the line for Sir Creek on the eastern bank on the basis of Thalweg doctrine. Fourth, the present map clearly integrates Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

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South-South Cooperation

South-South cooperation is a broad framework of collaboration among countries of the South in political, economic, social, cultural, environmental and technical domains. Involving two or more developing countries, it can take place on a bilateral, regional, intraregional or interregional basis. Developing countries share knowledge, skills, expertise and resources to meet their development goals through concerted efforts. Recent developments in South-South cooperation have taken the form of increased volume of South-South trade, South-South flows of foreign direct investment, movements towards regional integration, technology transfers, sharing of solutions and expertise, and other forms of exchanges.

Absar Hafeez

Guiding Principles

South-South cooperation is a manifestation of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South that contributes to their national well-being, their national and collective self-reliance and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The South-South cooperation agenda and South-South cooperation initiatives must be determined by the countries of the South, guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit.

Objectives

The basic objectives of South-South collaboration, according to the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries endorsed by the General Assembly in 1978 (resolution 33/134), are:

- To foster self-reliance of developing countries by enhancing their creative capacity to find solutions to their development problems in keeping with their own aspirations, values and specif needs;
- To promote and strengthen collective self-reliance among developing countries through the exchange of experiences; the pooling, sharing and use of their technical and other resources; and the development of their complementary capacities;
- To strengthen the capacity of developing countries to identify and analyse together their main development issues, and formulate the requisite strategies to address them;
- To increase the quantity and enhance the quality of international development cooperation through the pooling of capacities to improve the effectiveness of the resources devoted to such cooperation;
- To create and strengthen existing technological capacities in the developing countries in order to improve the effectiveness with which such capacities are used and to improve the capacity of developing countries to absorb and adapt technology and skills to meet their specific developmental needs;
- To increase and improve communication among developing countries, leading to a greater awareness of common problems and wider access to available knowledge and experience as well as the creation of new knowledge in tackling development problems;
- To recognize and respond to the problems and requirements of the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states and the countries most seriously affected by, for example, natural disasters and other crises; and
- To enable developing countries to achieve a greater degree of participation in international economic activities and to expand international cooperation for development.

Gwadar Port: A story of South–South cooperation

Gwadar Port is the southern hub of the CPEC which connects China's northwestern Xinjiang province to the Arabian Sea. A modern, deep-sea port, it gives China quick access to ports in the Middle East and Africa. By bypassing the South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca, it cuts the distance from China to Europe from 45 days to 10. The economic corridor of roads, railways, and pipelines will boost trade and development not only in Pakistan and China but also along the entire Eurasian Silk Road. As an outlet to the sea, the CPEC promises to unlock the vast potential of landlocked Central Asia.

As part of China's One Belt, One Road initiative, the CPEC will expand Pakistani infrastructure and deepen economic links with China. Pakistan's railway network will be extended to join the Chinese rail network in Xinjiang, enabling rail travel from the Arabian Sea to the Pacific Ocean, while a network of pipelines will transport liquefied natural gas and oil throughout Pakistan and into China. With the help of CPEC, Pakistan could emerge as a regional trading hub on account of the reduced shipping distance from China's eastern coast to the Arabian Sea and Africa. The route will also give Pakistan wider connectivity to Central Asia.

A story of South–South cooperation, the Gwadar seaport promises to remake Pakistan by linking its fortunes more closely with that of China through a network of roads, rail, and pipelines. It will drastically shorten the distance between China and the Middle East and Africa. Better connectivity promises to boost trade and development throughout the region and fundamentally reshape the global economic landscape.

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In 1949, Chinese Communist Party leader Mao Zedong installed 'Communist Government' in the People's Republic of China (PRC). The United States refused to recognize this new government, and continued to recognize and support Chiang Kai-shek's exiled Republic of China government in Taipei. In 1950, during the Korean War, the US and PRC armed forces clashed. During the 1960s, the United States was riled at PRC's support and aid to North Vietnam during the Vietnam War. From 1970s onward, both countries experienced normal relations especially after US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's secret diplomatic mission to Beijing in 1971. Then, in 1972, the landmark visit of President Nixon to China came as a dramatic first step toward normalizing relations with the PRC. This normalization of relations culminated in 1979, when the United States established full diplomatic relations with China. Notwithstanding these developments, China followed a policy of 'non-confrontation' that allowed it to build its incredible economic and military might. At the time, when China was making progress by leaps and bounds, the US was busy fighting wars all over the world. Neither China challenged the US-led world order nor did it indulge itself in futile wars. Consequently, at the global landscape, China has emerged as a country ready to replace US as the world superpower, and upend the world order. Following the policy of non-confrontation, China didn't retaliate for any hostile action by its enemy; but, no more; China is now responding vigorously to every step taken by its rivals.

US-China COLD WAR

Mehboob Hussain Babar

Causes of New Cold War

According to statistics released by the International Monitory Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, China will surpass the United States as the world's largest economy in 2024, therefore, the pain US is going through can be termed as the birth pangs of a new world order, led by China. That's why, US is in a combative mood vis-à-vis China. Today, US-China ties have advanced from uptight standoffs to a complex blend of intensifying diplomacy, growing international rivalry and increasingly intertwined economies - reminiscent of the 20th century Cold War between the then-Soviet Union and the United States. Under President Trump, the rancour between the US and China is aggravating in domains, inter alia, defence, human rights, trade, technology, media and diplomacy, that is evident in the escalation of actions and reprisals from both sides.

After the spread of coronavirus to almost across the globe, World Health Organization (WHO) designated the novel coronavirus disease, i.e. Covid-19, outbreak as a pandemic. Since then, leading officials from both China and the United States have been blaming each other for the outbreak of the pandemic. A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson even claimed that the US military contingent brought the virus to the Chinese city of Wuhan, while President Trump made repeated references to the "Chinese virus," which he thinks spread because of failures on the part of the Chinese government.

The United States has also persistently rebuked China for the forced sterilization of Uyghur women, lobbied Europe to ban Chinese security screening firm Nuctech; imposed visa restrictions on Chinese officials held responsible for Hong Kong's new National Security Law; and placed 90-day limits on work visas for Chinese journalists. In response, while bluntly telling Washington to butt out of Hong Kong affairs, China's Foreign Ministry branded US criticism of its Uyghur policy as "baseless". Prior to this, China had withdrawn the press credentials of journalists at three leading US newspapers and warned to put American companies on a list of

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proscribed foreign entities. Moreover, in July 2020, the United States ordered China to close its consulate in Houston, Texas, alleging that it was a hub of espionage and intellectual property theft. In response, China not only condemned the order, but also retaliated by closing the US consulate in Chengdu. In the same month, Washington indicted two Chinese hackers for allegedly stealing coronavirus vaccine research, and sanctioned eleven Chinese companies for their reported role in human rights abuses in Xinjiang.

For the Chinese government, American actions constitute blatant interference in its internal affairs—a grievance with deep-seated roots going back to its struggles with imperialist powers in the 19th century.

Similarities with US-Soviet Cold War

There are six clear parallels of the current state of relations between China and the United States with the US-Soviet Cold War.

1. Sino-US conflict is between the world's two most powerful states—one a liberal democracy and the other avowedly communist.
2. It is a system-wide rivalry for hegemony and supremacy.
3. It is about communist and democratic values as well as power.
4. It will be an almost three-decade contest for global ascendancy.
5. A geopolitical bifurcation of the world is likely.
6. Neither side wants a full-scale war, especially when both states have nukes.

Impact on South Asia's Geopolitics

During the Cold War, US adopted the 'policy of containment' against the Soviet Union but this time, it is for China. Following the 'Marshal Plan' during the Cold War, the US is now investing heavily in India, inking multiple agreements from technology advancement to economic boom and military strength to countering Chinese influence in the region. On the other hand, China is negotiating strategic pacts and economic deals with America's main adversary, that is, Iran, to undermine India's growing influence there and in Afghanistan. Due to the Sino-US cold war, South Asia is undergoing phenomenal changes as one direct impact has been ejection of India from Iran's major strategic projects, especially those related to Chabahar Port project — once touted as rival to Pakistan's Gwadar and ultimately CPEC project in the long run.

Recently, during his visit to the United Kingdom, US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, called for a global coalition to confront China. His assertion also shows how regional groupings matter most in the present context, since they allow countries to tap into each other's strengths and resources. That is why China's deal with Iran, which is also pretty unfairly sidelined by the US authorities, makes so much sense. Iran showed its willingness to be part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI); therefore, the Chinese are at the centre of the biggest projects in the region and all members of the alliances they build in the process will benefit from them. Chinese presence in Iran will not only extend its dominance over the Middle East, but will also have check over the Indian activities in Iran. It may even provide a base for Iran and Pakistan to come together and build a healthy bilateral relationship. Further, in June 2020, in a significant show of economic diplomacy in South Asia, China announced tariff exemption for 97% of exports from Bangladesh—a "major success" in Dhaka-Beijing relationship. On the other hand, despite repeated requests for a meeting in the last four months, the Bangladeshi Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, has not met India's High Commissioner — a clear sign of Dhaka's strained relations with New Delhi and a shift for closer ties with Islamabad

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and Beijing. Moreover, all Indian projects in Bangladesh have slowed down since the re-election of Prime Minister Hasina in 2019 with Chinese infrastructure projects receiving more support from Dhaka. China also has a violent clash at the Line of Actual Control with India. This marks the significant change in China's decades-old approach of making peaceful economic progress to getting involved into regional or global conflicts.

Implications for Pakistan

US-China cold war will force Pakistan to negotiate the strategic interests of the two competing superpowers, becoming a front-line state in the emerging conflict. How Pakistan plays its cards in this game will determine the future of its economy, foreign policy and democracy, at least for the next few decades. The United States is Pakistan's largest export destination, but China is Pakistan's largest foreign investor. Thus, Pakistan is in troubled waters because the two economic giants will emerge in this cold war, one led by the capitalist USA, and the other by communists China. It will be hard for Pakistan to pick a side navigating its landscape because there will be no easy trade-offs.

This new cold war already poses serious challenges to Pakistan. Bilaterally, the US has sanctioned Pakistan, withheld its Coalition Support Funds levelled allegations of supporting terrorism and demanded a freeze on its strategic capabilities with no such demand being made on India. The US also strongly opposed our relations with China, especially implementation of CPEC as part of the BRI since this would neutralize American attempts to contain China. Resultantly, Washington is trying to undermine CPEC through multilateral financial institutions, supporting Indian claims that CPEC passes through 'disputed territory' and encouraging opposition to CPEC within Pakistan. America has made a strategic calculation to support India's rise as a regional hegemon, to counterbalance China. This will create an interesting dynamic where Pakistan and China stand on one side on issues like Kashmir, while the US and India stand on the other side. In this situation, Pakistan should pursue political, economic and security engagements with China, Bangladesh and Iran, by broadening its relations with these countries—and with Russia too. In foreseeable future, Pakistan would have cold relations with the US because of shifting power paradigms. In this situation, the best Pakistan can achieve is conflict prevention. For this, it must ensure credible deterrence in response to the Indian military buildup.

Conclusion

The ongoing cold war is considerably different and more drastic from that between the United States and the Soviet Union. Instead of a bipolar US-Soviet conflict with prominent defence alliances, NATO and the Warsaw Pact, there are now three powers contesting for power with shifting alliances. For now, China and Russia see merit in a strategic partnership against America whereas America's allies are uncertain about Trump's commitment to their security. From the end of the cold war in 1990 to an America-dominated unipolar world till 2008, the global order has changed from bipolar to a more complicated and complex multi-polar. Trump's drive to 'Make America Great Again' implicitly acknowledged that the US has lost its supreme global position. Thus, it has put an embargo on Russia and started a trade war with China. But, now China is not only strongly retaliating but has also started challenging the US and its allies. The proposed long-term strategic partnership with Iran is the best manifestation of Chinese new approach in global geopolitics. Therefore, if tensions between the two countries escalate in the coming years, polarization in the world will increase. ■

The author is a member of staff.

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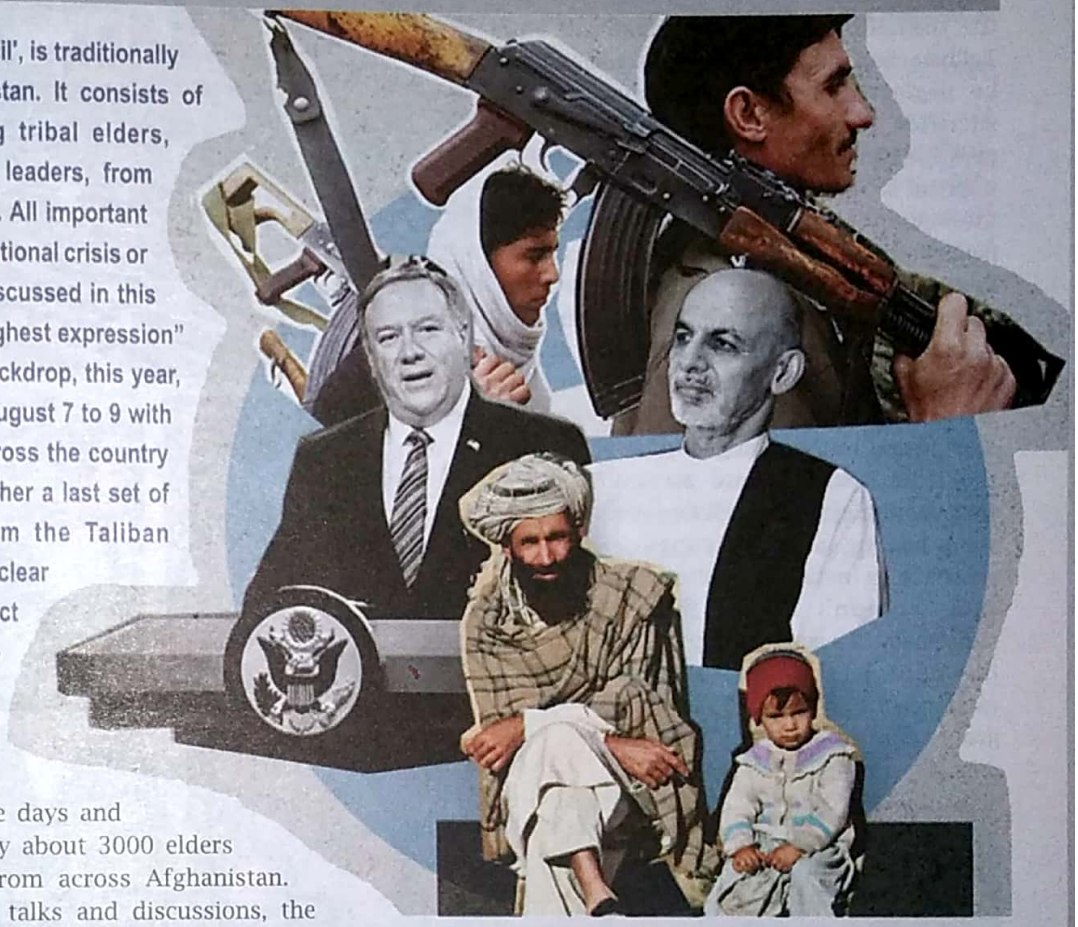
Loya Jirga, Intra-Afghan Dialogue and the Challenges Ahead

Opportunity does not waste time with those who are unprepared

Mairaj ul Hamid Nasri



The Loya Jirga, or 'Grand Council', is traditionally the supreme body in Afghanistan. It consists of Afghan dignitaries, including tribal elders, religious figures and political leaders, from different ethnicities and groups. All important matters, including resolving a national crisis or settling a national issue, are discussed in this council. It is considered the "highest expression" of the Afghan people. In this backdrop, this year, the Loya Jirga was held from August 7 to 9 with hundreds of delegates from across the country participating to determine whether a last set of 400 hardcore prisoners from the Taliban insurgency should be freed to clear the way for long-awaited direct peace talks between Afghanistan's warring sides.

The Loya Jirga 2020 took three days and was attended by about 3000 elders and notables from across Afghanistan. After extensive talks and discussions, the council has approved the release of 400 Taliban prisoners, who in the words of President Ashraf Ghani were "very dangerous," but releasing them or keeping them in prison was to decide the fate of the intra-Afghan dialogue. The Jirga has now authorized President Dr Ashraf Ghani to go ahead for the release of these inmates from various prisons of the country. Consequently, President Ghani has issued the decree of release of the prisoners, thus burying the rumours of failure of intra-Afghan dialogue.

Earlier, the Afghan government, after the inking of the agreement between the United States and Taliban, started releasing, in phases, about 5000 Taliban prisoners from Afghan prisons, but detainment of the aforementioned over 4000 inmates could have derailed the process of reaching an agreement. Hence, it's good news for the stakeholders that all the obstacles in the way of reaching the destination have been removed. Taliban have also welcomed the development and announced their readiness for the planned meetings with Afghan authorities.

Nevertheless, despite this monumental decision of the Loya Jirga, the intra-Afghan dialogue will face many issues and intricacies due to the dual game by some actors in this whole episode. These negotiations are not such simple that they might be concluded in the near future—as is envisaged by the brokers of the US-Taliban deal.

In implementation phase, at first, the Afghanistan's constitution will have to be amended, which won't be an easy task. Secondly, Taliban have two cadres; one that is in headquarters and spearheads the negotiations and takes decisions while the other cadre consists of the commanders

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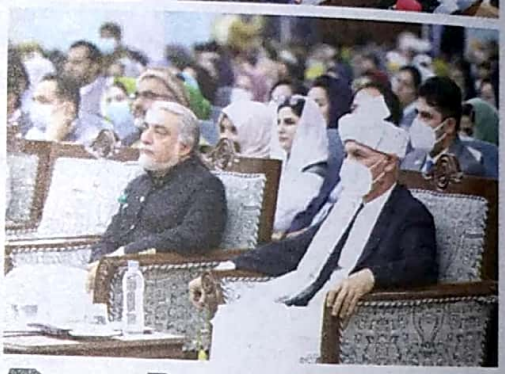
that are fighting on ground against US forces, Afghan army and their allies. In case of a cease-fire before the agreement, these commanders will be consulted and persuaded by the concerned circles. For reaching a consensus on future developments, the Taliban leaders and interlocutors highly regard the say of these commanders. So, bringing them on one page and streamlining them in the mainstream politics will also be a hectic job for all the stakeholders.

Thirdly, during upcoming peace talks at Doha, Qatar, deciding on the future political system of Afghanistan and its governance structure will be another daunting challenge. Fourthly, the readiness of pro-status quo and anti-Taliban elements to reach a consensus cannot be neglected, because they may have to sacrifice their positions, privileges and prestige conferred upon them by the current political setup. They have to be receptive for the new governance mechanism for the sake of having a long-term, stable and viable political system, required for the uplift of every sector of Afghanistan. As far as I understand the Afghan politics, I believe this tug of war between the pro- and anti-status quo elements will be detrimental to the dialogue in the near future. There are various ethnicities in Afghanistan having a significant presence in national politics; they wouldn't accept the supremacy of a single group as it would jeopardize their existence. Those warlords and groups that are the beneficiaries of Afghanistan's war economy will never want to lose their cash cow.



Apart from internal challenges, the intra-Afghan dialogue may face threats on the external fronts as well. Afghanistan is the battlefield of proxy wars and many regional and global players have their vested interests in this country's internal politics. Different political groups are supported by various states and are funded accordingly for achieving their interests and damaging those of the hostile players, even though it may create chaos and anarchy in the country. The role of Pakistan, China, India, Russia and Iran in the success and failure of the dialogue will be decisive. Political, social, strategic, economic and integration issues of these states are linked with the situation in Afghanistan; therefore, they will undoubtedly influence the process, one way or another. These states must be on board while reaching a long-lasting peace in Afghanistan.

Pakistan, being the immediate neighbour and most-affected country due to fragile situation in Afghanistan, as well as the most active actor for success of Afghan peace process, will have to play a key role in this regard. While acknowledging the long-term struggle of Pakistan for restoring peace in Afghanistan, Taliban have called for holding meetings with other parties in Pakistan as a neutral venue. Pakistan has always welcomed Afghan brothers on its land, and will once again facilitate the Afghans for resolving their outstanding political issues here.

To conclude, the aforementioned challenges to the success of the process need vigilant attention of the stakeholders. These challenges and obstacles are also discussed in the previous issues of this magazine by this author time and again which are still valid and worth reminding to the stakeholders.

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Domestic Violence in the 21st century

Forms, Causes, Effects and Remedies

Afaque Ahmed

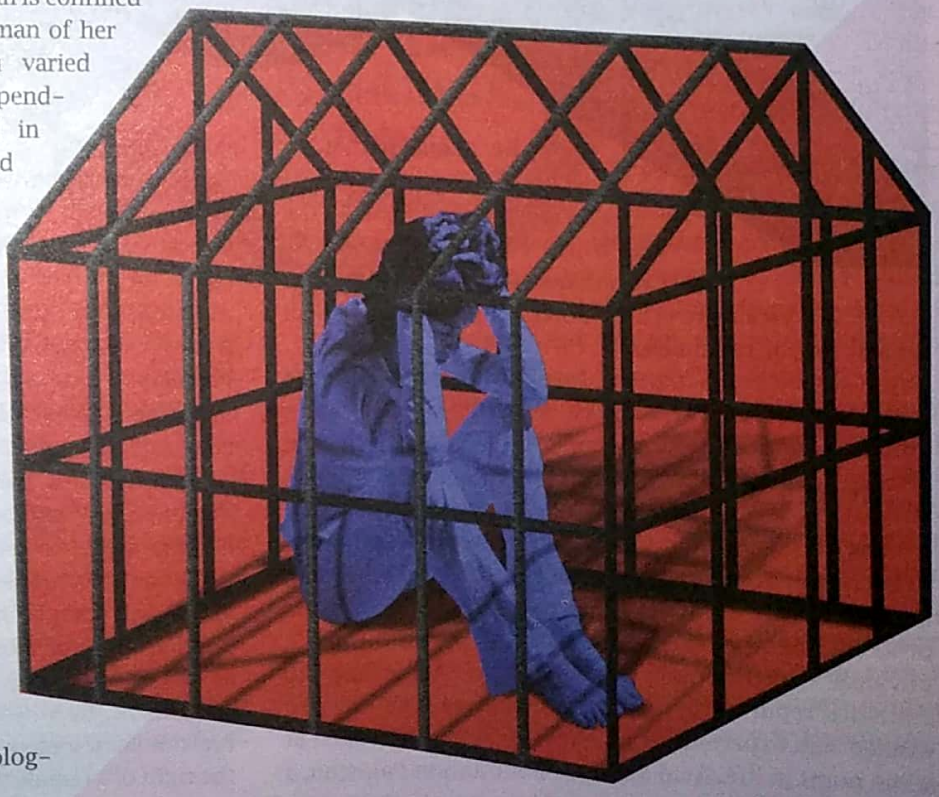
Introduction

Domestic violence with its different forms has been a sort of ritual across the world. Throughout history, woman was seen as inferior to man. She was domesticated, objectified and kept only for man's sexual pleasure and bringing up babies. The purpose of her existence through systemic sexism was limited to doing tiring domestic chores, giving birth to babies and rearing them. With her basic rights as a human snatched, she was physically battered and mentally traumatized. It was, then, thanks to feminist struggle in the mid-20th century that helped women achieve a status of a human being. A lot of basic rights starting from suffrage were then rendered to women, and laws were enforced to curb suffering of, and violence on, them.

Nonetheless, disappointing fact is, in most countries even today, in the 21st century, woman is confined into four walls of the house with a man of her father's choice, suffering through varied syndromes, without financial independence, and her expression of will in decision-making. Although the world has manoeuvred its way into the acme of human rights preservation, domestic violence has unfortunately been continuing relentlessly, to take a heavy toll on the frailty of woman. In the wake of Covid-19, domestic violence reportedly increased in the face of social isolation and economic stress of working from home. In Europe, within the first two weeks of lockdown, exponential number of calls made to domestic violence help lines were reported.

Forms of Violence and their Effects on Women

Domestic violence is broadly categorized into three forms: psychological, sexual and physical. Psychological violence encompasses a range of acts such as name-calling, insulting and blackmailing that affect woman mentally and emotionally. From issuing threats to forcibly isolating her, man uses different bad tactics to control and dominate woman. Many a man uses disinformation tactics, distorts facts and withholds information to inflict torture on woman. Additionally, use of children such as snatching away and physically attacking them, by man is often used as a tool to drive woman into doing what she doesn't want to. Economic dependence on man is yet another problem for woman. Man wields control over resources, e.g. food, shelter, clothing, transportation and money, implying that woman is forced to remain in an abusive relationship.



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Sexual violence as a form of domestic violence occurs in different periods of time in different circumstances. It implies woman being sexually exploited. Many a woman is not asked about her will in choosing her partner; she is forcibly married off to man she doesn't even know. In the normal case scenario, woman isn't asked by her partner for her permission to intercourse. She is expected to sexually satisfy her husband in whatsoever situation she is. According to a newspaper report, over two-third of men are immersed in non-consensual sex with their partners. Many a time, because her partner keeps extramarital affairs, woman suffers through inability to reach her orgasm. In the worst case scenario, female partner is driven into forced exposure to pornography for the satisfaction of her man. Other than these issues, forced pregnancy and abortion are prevalent in most developing societies of the world. The fact of woman being a child-bearing machine can't be denied either, in the Islamic world especially Pakistan, as the 2020 World Population Report by the US Population Bureau estimates the rapid growth of population with an annual fertility rate of 3.6 children.

Physical violence is a severe form of domestic violence that calls for urgent redress. Beating, kicking, hair-grabbing and acid-throwing which cause physical damage to human body come in this category. Women in our society where there is a lack of awareness as to what a sense of freedom and self-worth is are often subjected to such violence to extract something of man's interest. Or on trifles, without giving second thought to a problem, men get serious and find peace in inflicting physical violence on their women. According to statistics reported by the United Nations, one in three women has experienced physical or sexual violence at some point in life. Acid Survivor Foundation Pakistan, a non-governmental organization, reported 73 cases of acid attacks in 2016 in Pakistan, 52% decline from 2014 when 153 cases of the same nature were reported. Such grave situation, in the country where effective monitoring system, legislation against the violence of woman and provision of facilities to the survivors are lacking, depicts where we stand in terms of protection of women and their rights.

Causes of Domestic Violence

One of the most underlying reasons of domestic violence is patriarchy. A plethora of studies suggest that patriarchal mindset of people has led them to inflicting mental torture on woman just to restrain her freedom of expression and choice. Owing to patriarchal structure of our society and because of unequal distribution of power between men and women, a lot of women have to endure discriminatory behaviour, abusive language and violent acts at home.

Wide disparity between man's and woman's education is another prominent cause of domestic violence. Since inflicting of violence by man reeks of his power over resources, woman's inability to earn a handsome amount of money holds her back from speaking against the oppression. Should woman be educated, have ability to do a job, and share capital in running families, she would be independent in decision-making ergo unscathed from man's violent actions. Parents seldom invest in girls' education because they think she won't be able to make the most of her education as she will soon be married off. According to the Global Gender Gap Index Report 2020, Pakistan ranked 151 out of 153 countries, particularly 143 in educational attainment, by which the worst situation that can later fuel domestic violence can be understood. Snatching away the right of a female to education has repercussions as she

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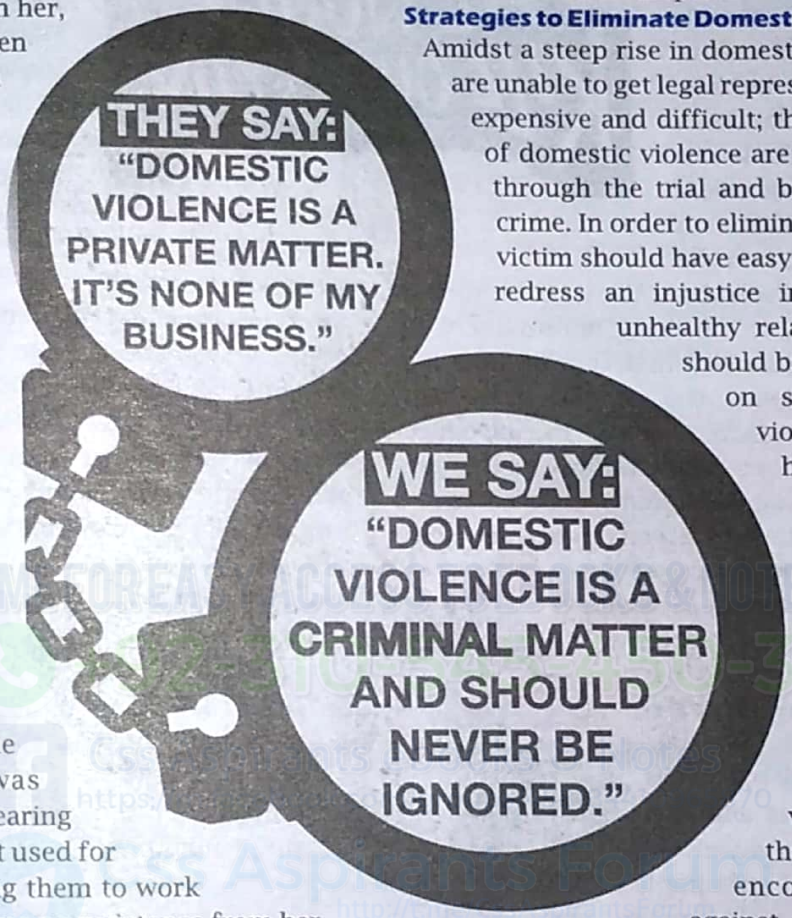
continues facing domestic abuse.

Another reason of domestic violence is financial and economic instability that runs deep through the impoverished population of Third World countries. Especially in the Islamic world, quagmires of unemployment, inflation and overpopulation are prevalent. Working of a woman outside her house is considered a 'dishonour' but money that a man earns after a day's work is insufficient to meet the expenditures of a family. Although woman with her man compromises on many issues like shopping, hygienic food, fruit, etc. when she sees her children hungry, she can't bear that and hence starts fighting with her partner. Pangs of hunger and lack of job opportunities create a sense of frustration and discomfort in her, leading to clashes that often end up in divorces. In Pakistan, domestic violence is predominantly the bane of inequality between income and expenditure.

Domestic violence in Pakistan has increased so much that it is now considered a normal activity. If violence is culturally supported, it will fuel more violence and will become a norm and would be reinforced in the society. If we peep into the past to know how woman was domesticated and snatched off her rights, we find that during the agrarian period, she was considered only a child-bearing machine, an important asset used for bringing up babies, readying them to work in the fields. When there came no resistance from her, she was enclosed into four walls of the house. First, her freedom of action was curbed; her activities and roles reduced to bringing up babies and domestic engagements; then restrictions in lashings came upon women. Since then, albeit with the help of feminist struggle, a lot of improvement has been noticed in the condition of women. Similar restrictions in most areas, however, continue taking heavy toll on the women without social censure and backlash.

Witnessing or suffering violence also gives rise to domestic violence. In big nuclear families and densely-populated areas, male children are often involved in quarrels and bad activities. Being frustrated with them, their parents use harsh behaviour, such as beating, to control them. This causes a fateful effect on their behaviour in their married life. According to Nancy Choodrow, an imminent feminist and author of the 'Reproduction of Mothering', boys and girls learn their gender roles from infancy, as boys imitate their fathers having social power and dominance, and girls imitate their mothers being submissive and vulnerable to attacks. In similar vein, parents' strategy to control their children's behaviour through coercive measures results into their using oppressive behaviour; witnessing and suffering family violence turns out to be the bane of using violence. Through this vicious cycle, domestic violence becomes rampant.


THEY SAY:
"DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A PRIVATE MATTER. IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS."
WE SAY:
"DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A CRIMINAL MATTER AND SHOULD NEVER BE IGNORED."

Strategies to Eliminate Domestic Violence

Amidst a steep rise in domestic violence, most females are unable to get legal representation as it has become expensive and difficult; therefore, the perpetrators of domestic violence are no more fearful of going through the trial and being legally tried for the crime. In order to eliminate domestic abuse, every victim should have easy access to legal counsel to redress an injustice in case of divorce from unhealthy relationship. Legal counsels should be available for the victims on state expense. Domestic violence help lines, shelter homes and protection officers for legal, medical and social aid are supposed to be available at the victims' earliest convenience, as they are at a premium in most of the developing countries like Pakistan. In this way, survivors of violence at the hands of their male partners can be encouraged to raise voice against and fight injustice done to them, and this crime can be reduced to low.

As in educational institutions, there is wide discrepancy regarding the gender roles; girls are taught and chosen for the roles that show their vulnerability and the roles boys are taught aim at their strength and dominance. Preference to boys over girls can result in dominating behaviour of boys, which then turns out to be the reason of domestic violence. If sense of gender equality is bred into students, it will create a sense of equality everywhere, man would give respect to woman, and woman in case of violence would be able to give a befitting response to man. Promotion of gender equality can give way to improve-

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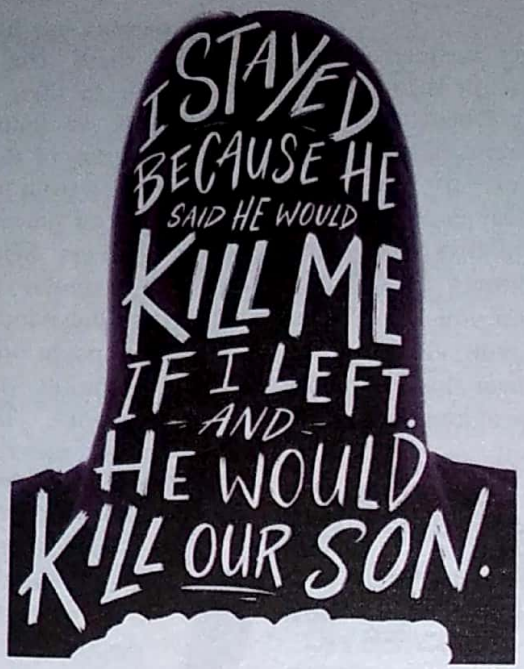
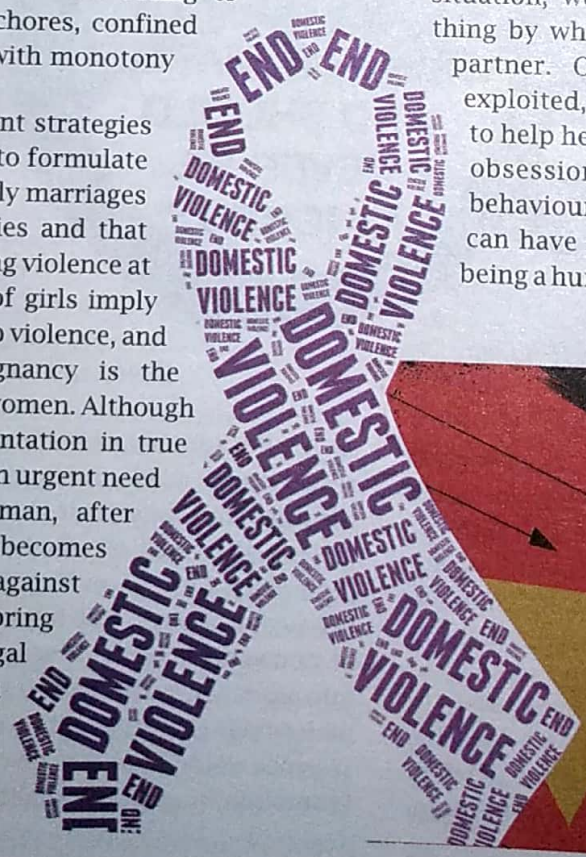
ment in deteriorating conditions of woman, as is evident from urban areas.

Along with this, the factor that exacerbates the situation is the prevailing ignorance in the society. Man isn't well switched on to woman rights, thus inflicting damage on her life seems to him a normal activity. Similarly, woman is not aware of her rights being snatched off by society. Had man been educated, he could have awareness concerning rights of woman. That a plenty of male partners don't have realization of their woman's sufferings and how merely an abusive, daunting remark can hurt her as she leaves her father's luxurious home where she has everything available on demand, creates a problem in the society. If a man is socialised about the ways he should behave with her woman, it can bring improvement in woman's mental health and result in decline of domestic abuse cases. For this, onus lies on the incumbent government of that particular state, to introduce educational programmes for men particularly, as they are perpetrators, in order that importance of woman as human being can be induced in their minds and that woman is not only married for seeing to babies and doing tiring chores, confined into four walls of home with monotony and boredom.



One of the most prominent strategies to end domestic abuse is to formulate laws that put a ban on early marriages and premature pregnancies and that prevent men from wreaking violence at women. Early marriages of girls imply that they are susceptible to violence, and forcible, premature pregnancy is the leading cause of death of women. Although such laws exist, implementation in true sense is missing; there is an urgent need for reforms. Once a woman, after dealing with constraints, becomes able to lodge a complaint against her man, she is unable to bring him behind bars due to legal and social constraints. In the first instance, she is not taken seriously, her problem considered only a domestic issue blown off. Later she is confronted with pursuing her case, for which she requires money to hire a legal counsel and time as our social justice system is in a shambles. Moreover she is disparaged in the society for going against her man's will. Such situation necessitates the laws to criminalise domestic violence and show seriousness to the issue, setting heavy penalty in terms of imprisonment and fine for abusers.



Conclusion

Domestic violence has long been prevalent in the world; every part of it is full of cases of violence done to woman by her intimate partner. It is an ill practice to reduce woman to a mere object who they think doesn't need a word of sympathy and has no feelings. Although awareness has reached in most urban areas, woman has realized that she is born equal to man in almost all respects, and that she is not only made to measure always up to man's expectations, in exchange of financial support of man yet in rural areas, woman continues worrying about whether doing a particular act would make her male partner content. At this critical situation, woman needs awareness of every kind of thing by which she can be exploited by her intimate partner. Once woman knows that she is being exploited, she should be helped in every way possible to help her escape mental trauma. In this way, man's obsession to control and dominate woman's behaviour and activities can be belittled and woman can have sense of freedom which implies a sign of being a human.

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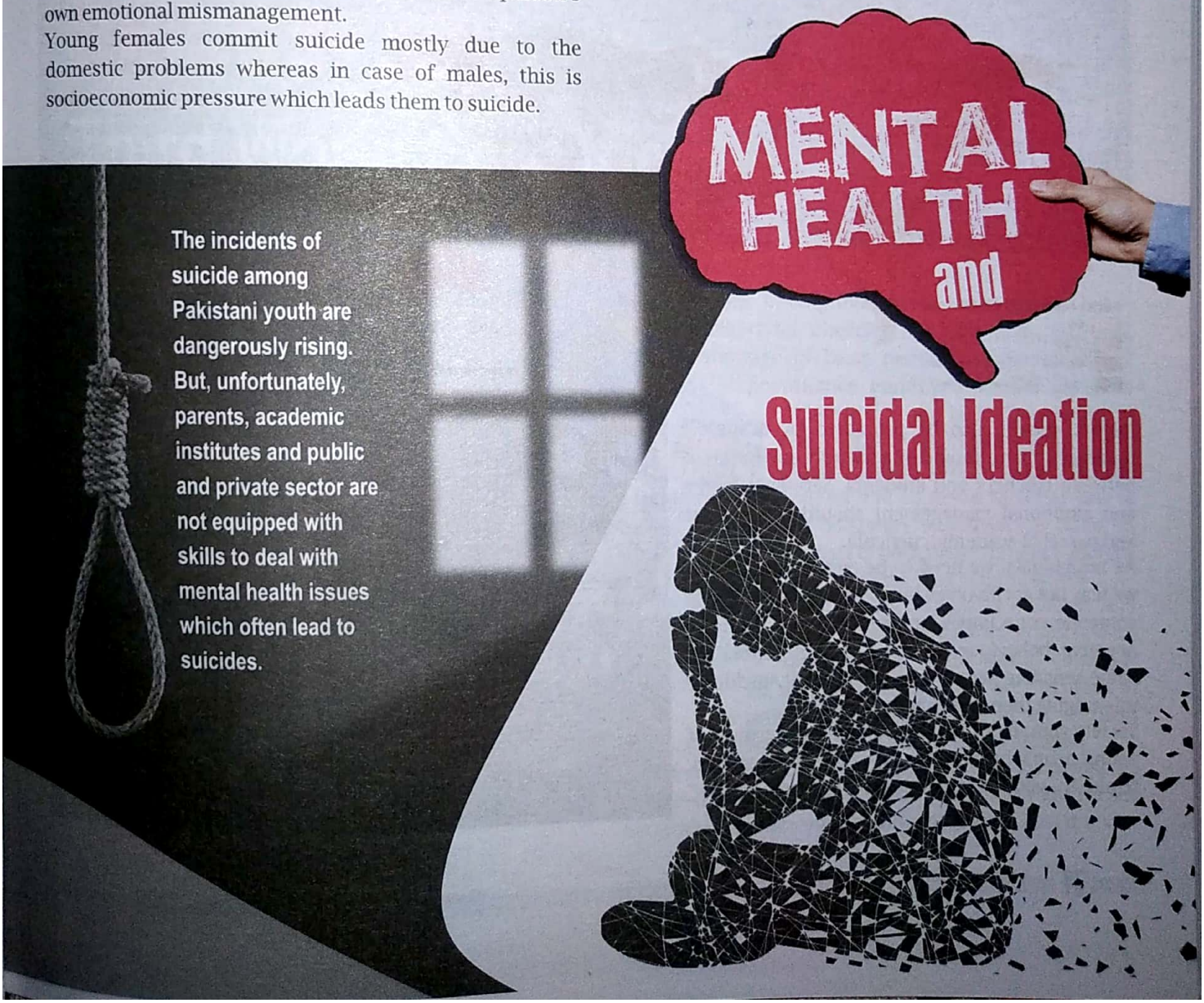
Saba Sibghat

MENTAL HEALTH and Suicidal Ideation


The incidents of suicide among Pakistani youth are dangerously rising. But, unfortunately, parents, academic institutes and public and private sector are not equipped with skills to deal with mental health issues which often lead to suicides.

According to a report by World Health Organization, about 800,000 people around the world die due to suicide every year, which is one person every 40 seconds. The report further says: "Every suicide is a tragedy that affects families, communities and entire countries and has long-lasting effects on the people left behind. Suicide occurs throughout the lifespan and was the second leading cause of death among 15-29 year-olds globally in 2016. Suicide does not just occur in high-income countries, but is a global phenomenon in all regions of the world. In fact, over 79% of global suicides occurred in low- and middle-income countries in 2016."

The WHO further estimated that in 2016, the ratio of suicide in Pakistan was 2.9 per 100,000, i.e. over 5,500 ended their lives in the country that year. The actual number of people committing suicide is, however, much higher than this, as some critics opine.

Who is to be blamed for this quandary? The answer to this pertinent question is: socioeconomic pressures, domestic pressures, competitive academic environment, social media, lack of career counselling, peer pressure, nepotism, weak family bonds, professional rivalry, depression and dearth of mental health care or a person's own emotional mismanagement.

Young females commit suicide mostly due to the domestic problems whereas in case of males, this is socioeconomic pressure which leads them to suicide.

Students commit suicide for not being able to secure marks they or their parents had expected. Some accomplished young men like CSP officers who are neither unsuccessful nor underprivileged also commit suicide. Then, what forces them to end their lives at the prime of their age and career? This terrible trend is not only disturbing but also raises grave questions about the state of mental health of our youth.

The suicidal inclinations among students in Asian countries like Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, and others have been reported broadly and are well recognized. Governments in these countries take the issue of student suicides earnestly. Many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) work to support students to deal with stress-related issues. But, situation in our country is entirely different. Suicide and mental health have never been taken seriously here. Psychological therapy and counselling in schools remains a distant dream. Parenting training is equally ignored.

Here, the first and foremost thing is to understand what causes a youngster to crush his or her life in the spring of youth.

Unfortunately our academic system is result-oriented where an average student stands nowhere. Even for the

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parents, the grades of their kid are more important than his/her effort and interest. This all is a very traumatic condition for our teenagers.

Most of the time, it is the toxic family environment, lack of communication among members of family which leads one to commit suicide. People show signs of disinterest and hopelessness but there is no one to smell these signs in an individual because they have few friends in real life than on social media.

If we talk of solution of suicide problem among Pakistani youth, the role of parenting is primary. Parents should be hawk-eyed and must keep a vigilant watch on the activities of their children, especially take care that the child does not fall prey to drug abuse which is closely linked to suicide. Parents should step into their children's shoes to understand their concerns.

Students should not only be judged on the basis of their results but their individual interests, attributes and talents should also be promoted by academic institutes. There should be a friendly environment between teachers and students. Self-help books and emotional management should be the part and parcel of academic curricula.

As individuals, we need to be empathetic so that we may not get involved into bullying and mocking someone consciously or unconsciously, because negative behaviour becomes mental ordeal for some sensitive people who can commit suicide by misjudging themselves as worthless.

Society should not rebuff the emotional growth of young people by using its so-called moral maxim, "Hold in your anger instead of expressing it." Because when these bottled-up emotions do not get cathartic relief, they become suicidal. There should be the trend of transmutation of negative emotions into physical activities like sports. The concept of traditional community centres should remain intact where people disburden their emotional cargo

It is the role of print and electronic media to spread awareness about mental health so that people may not feel shy to take mental health care. Mental health should be treated like physical health because, after all, mind is also as much an organ of the body as are heart, lungs and kidneys which need cure in case of an ailment. It will be a great public service on the part of media.

Government must devise unbiased socioeconomic plans to address poverty in Pakistan which is another major cause of suicide. Resource distribution for mental health should be appropriate and judiciously spent on mental health.

The customary low trend of suicide due to the influence of Islam in our lives appears to have undergone a fundamental change in Pakistan as this vice has grown into a major public health problem. There is need for teamwork on the part of government, non-governmental groups and public and mental health experts to take up this dare.

The author has keen interest in motivational writings.

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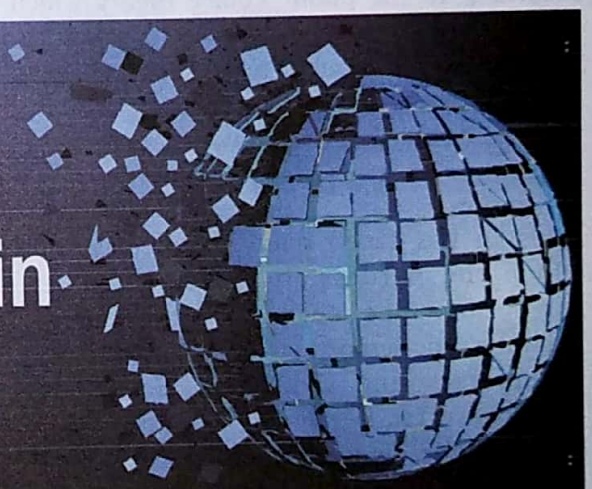
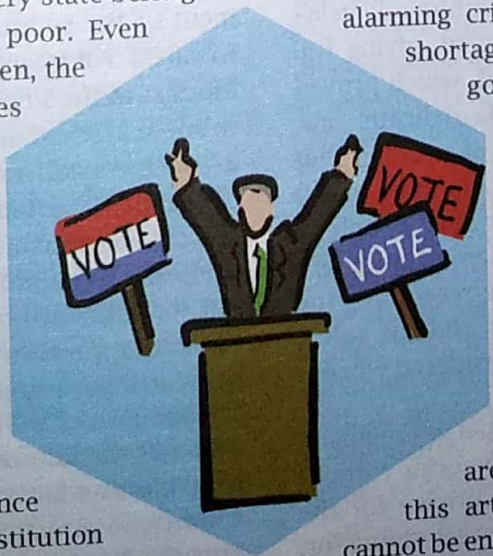
The Latin term *"demokratia"* literally means the rule of the people. This takes into consideration all the demands of the populace; what changes they desire, how they would like their needs to be met, and what steps they expect their government to take in order to make amends in the defective areas of the country. The government elected by the nation, then, has to take necessary measures, like the implementation of certain laws to avoid crime, undivided focus on the economy and financial stability of the country, prioritizing the knowledge departed to the youth, especially awareness about the country's state of affairs, to ensure that its people are satisfied. That is how the ideal democratic republic starts its journey on the road to success.

Anna Kazmi

Why Democracy Fails in Third World Countries



The Third World is an obsolete term which was coined in the Cold War era to refer to states which remained neutral in their take on the clash between the First World and Second World nations. The countries belonging to the "Third World" category were simply classified as the ones which didn't side with any of the countries in either of the first two worlds. At the beginning, this term meant underdeveloped or least-developed countries, or the Global South, and every state belonging to this category was termed as poor. Even though that stereotype was soon broken, the term had imprinted itself on the names of the countries grouped under it, which are considered backward, unprogressive or inexperienced, whereas the correct term should be developing, advancing, or semi-developed countries.



Democracy in the so-called Third World has been a topic of discussion since long. Ever since the colonial powers set foot in India, the ideology behind the perfect system of governance had kept evolving until a proper constitution was introduced; and later, when the first elections in India were held in 1920. After independence in 1947, the first democratic elections in Pakistan were held in 1970. It was decided, then, that Pakistan will follow a democratic pattern of administration — not taking into account the four military governments Pakistan was subjected to.

For a democratic state to prove successful, it is crucial that the nation be aware of who it is voting for, and the political figures contesting elections know of the great responsibility that comes with the seat of the Prime Minister. However, in countries where the overall understanding of the legislation is little to none, poverty is at its height, illiteracy and unemployment are among the many alarming crises plaguing the state along with the shortage of basic necessities, the system of governance employed hardly makes a difference. If the basic foundation of the country is ridden with such inconveniences, it is inevitable that the country will continue to suffer unless the obligatory initiatives are taken on the part of both the government and the state to rid the land of these issues.

Reasons why democracy is failing, or is on the road to decline in certain underdeveloped or "Third World" countries are multifarious, and a few are discussed in this article, as the magnitude of all of them cannot be encompassed within a few paragraphs.

In a democratic state, it is important that the people be educated enough to know which decision is right for the betterment of the country and which isn't. But, if a vast

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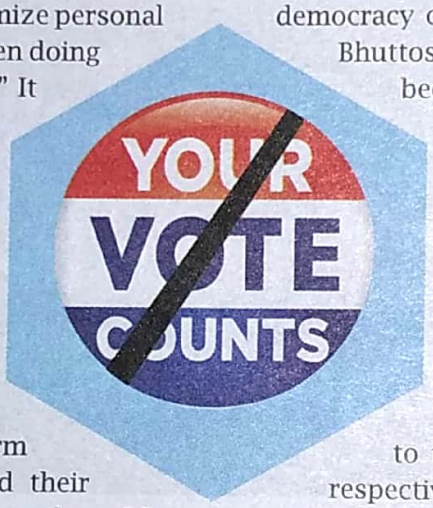
majority of the country's population is illiterate, and doesn't know any better than to fall for the meretricious assurances and so-called "pledges" made by the deceitful "leaders" of the nation, then who is to blame? Winthrop Talbot writes in his article 'Illiteracy and Democracy', "Illiteracy is a barrier to democracy ... we ignore the illiteracy of millions of unschooled men and women - apparently forgetting that the first requisite for government by representation is literacy." Illiteracy plays a huge role in the decline of our economy. The lack of education in most of the rural areas in Pakistan has become a huge concern, and raises a red flag when it comes to the future of the country.

Illiteracy leads to unemployment, and thus when those contesting elections untruthfully guarantee jobs for those without any source of income, a shelter for those without any roof over their heads, in exchange for their trust and their votes, they succeed. According to Masood Ahmed's essay, 'Democracy and Corruption', "Politicians act according to the public choice theory which says that people are self-interested and try to maximize personal benefits and act in public interest only when doing so also promotes their personal interest." It takes us to another reason why democracy can be considered fruitless: corruption.



Pakistan has faced many hurdles of which the hardest to overcome is corruption. Ellie Kedourie mentions Aristotle on democracy in his essay, 'Democracy and the Third World: Governance for Developing Countries': "For Aristotle, democracy was a vicious form of government, in which the many used their power for their own, rather than for the general good."

Time and again, we have suffered economically and financially at the hands of nefarious, iniquitous legislators and representatives of the government, giving full credit to the reign of ex-PM Nawaz Sharif, which proved extremely detrimental to the state in its delicate, raw, developing years. Plundering the wealth of a nation that was already struggling to make ends meet, for more than 9 years, might have been a wake-up call for most people to realize their mistake in voting for the same fraudulent party, but subsequently proved to be the reason for the lack of political trust between the rulers and the ruled, which is again a major principle to be considered when it comes to the governance of a country.

Political trust is a mutual understanding that is a requisite for any form of government to function smoothly without any inconveniences. It is a sort of reassurance for the nation that they have faith in whoever they are voting for. One of the most cardinal factors involved in the governance of a state is the connection between the ruling class and its subjects. One of the salient features of any form of administration is the respect and love with which the nation regards its ruler. A successful government can only prove to be so, if it is built on the basis of trust. A nation cannot make the right decision when it comes to electing the ruler of the state if it is sceptical of being confident in said government with the security of its wealth and future. In their article, Political Mistrust and the Economic Crisis in Southern Europe, Deigo Muro and Guillem Vidal write, "Political trust is important for the effective functioning of democracies and for having a smooth relationship between elected representatives and citizens." This only strengthens the argument that without a basic political trust in the nation for the legislation, the government cannot perform to the best of its abilities, which classifies as another hindrance to the progression of an underdeveloped democratic state.

Pre-existing dominance of the selected few families who took full control of the political state of affairs of the country for most part of its history, is another reason democracy couldn't flourish in Pakistan. The Sharifs, Bhuttos, Mazaris, and Legharis to name a few, have been taking turns heading the game that is governing the state of Pakistan, and that is a legacy that has been and may continue to pass down for generations in the families to come. These and a few other families have been involved in a web of monopolistic competition, the winning trophy to which is the seat of the Prime Minister. It does not take a genius to figure out the extreme lack of devotion to the betterment of the state during their respective regimes.

Foreign interference in internal affairs of the state is another factor which plays a vital role in the slow development of the country, i.e. the West's undivided attention towards Pakistan's state of affairs, its unparalleled interest in the future of Pakistan, and its extreme efforts to succeed in making Pakistan one of its puppets might be a controversial issue, but is true nonetheless. The so-called political bigwigs have been nothing better than pawns, whose controls lay elsewhere. Foreign interventions are something that cannot be completely avoided, but the influence of which can, and should be, kept to a minimum if a state is to flourish with the aid of its own dedicated government.

Exploitation of religion is another factor that can be the cause of the failure of democracy. The very inception of Pakistan was based on the fact that Muslims needed a country to practice their religion in peace. And that purpose has been more than well-served. However, the division of Islam into different sects, and subsequently the division of the Muslims in order to follow their

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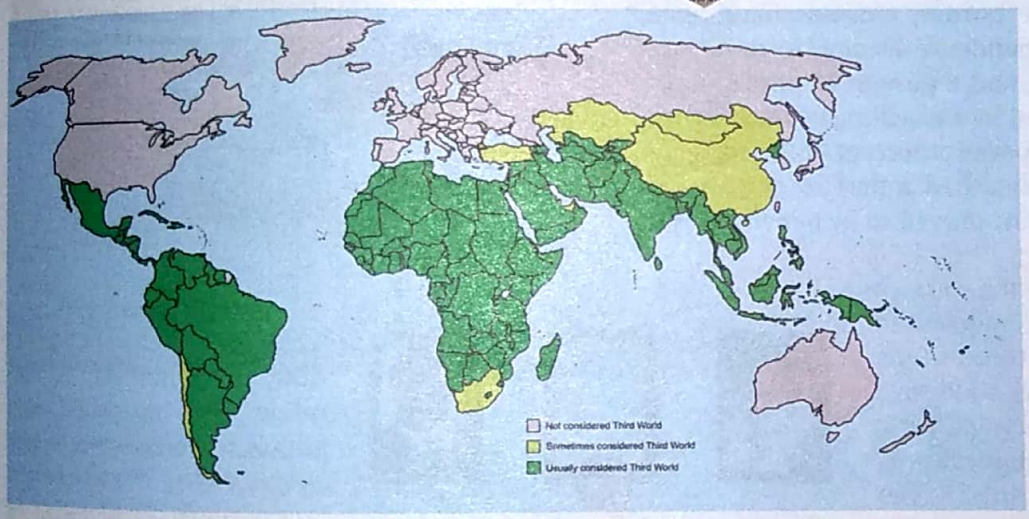
respective sections, has proven to be nothing but a blow to the ideology of Pakistan, the foundation of Islam, and the goal to achieve which fuelled the long struggle for independence. In the opinion of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, religion divides and weakens a state.

But what of the state whose existence is centred on religion, and is meant to give its followers a separate homeland? The point of view that may be seen out of this context is that people can start to use religion as a form of manipulation. Deepening the cracks between the various sects in the foundation of Islam, and then using the love of religion to their own political gains. Many politico-religious parties are kept at bay for the very reason that they would start to implement religion laws making, and would soon be taking unfair advantage of religion, exploiting the love of the followers for themselves, for the right to the seat.



Awareness of masses is a key factor in the election of a government. Any problem or crisis being faced by the country is ultimately an obstacle for its citizens, and it is pivotal for the subjugation of difficulties that the nation of the state, most importantly its youth, be au courant with the circumstances, and play their role in helping the state. However, when there is scarce knowledge regarding political and economic affairs amongst the populace, one cannot expect a country to prosper. Rousseau says in his treatise, "As soon as any man says of the affairs of his country, 'What does it matter to me?', the state may be given up or lost." It is highly influential that the inhabitants of a country be loyal to it, and remain updated on matters of any nature, ranging from trivial to significant. Cognizance of any state of affairs among the nation is mandatory and highly consequential when it comes to the prosperity of a country.

The progress of a nation depends greatly on how the country is run. A country's worth is determined not by the soil it exists on, but by the people that inhabit it and the ruling elite, who administer its day-to-day affairs, be they of any nature. Whether a country classifies as so-called "Third World", or under-developed, is also contingent on its legislation, how it is managed, what steps, if any, are taken to strengthen areas where its systems falter, and how its previously satisfactory zones are updated to compete with the best. What system of governance is adopted to control the state with, matters not as much as the parties or individual chosen for the duty. A country can prosper just as perfectly under a democratic regime, as it can under the reign of a monarch, given that it is looked after like a child and taken care of with love, devotion and sincerity.

"In a civil state," Rousseau writes, "security, justice, liberty and property are enjoyed by all." Keeping in perspective this line of thought, a country can surely flourish if its citizens trust the political leadership, and if the leadership reciprocates their trust by remaining faithful to them and the country, if the national exchequer is secure, if they are certain of the fact that there is no threat to their career and if they are guaranteed education. If the government of the country is not corrupted by their own interests in winning the title of the topmost positions, is sincere to the state and willing to go to any and all lengths to improve its faulty departments.

Mir Mahboob Ali says in his article, For Democracy to Flourish, "Without manifesting development, democracy becomes meaningless." Therefore, it is critical that every democratic government work with the notion of the development of the country, keeping at heart the best interests of its subjects. The leaders and the followers should work together towards a mutual goal, that is, the evolution of their country, and the first step taken in the path to advancement will indeed prove worth the while, subsequently demolishing the stereotype that is "the failure of democracy in the Third World". ■

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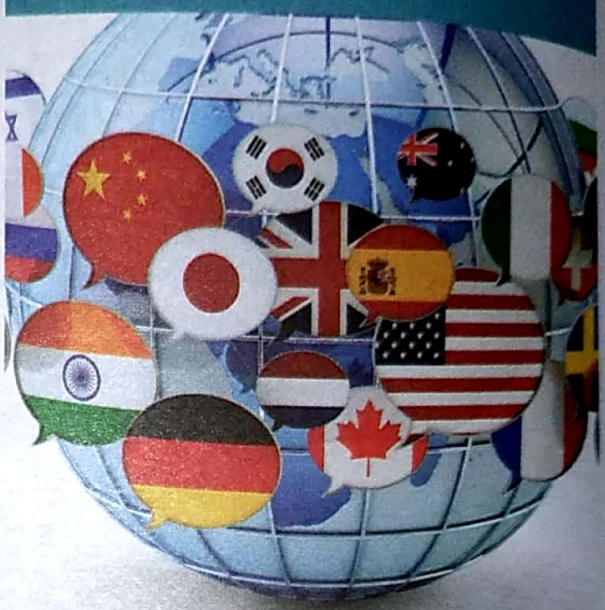
Zain Ul Arifeen

Journey towards a Pragmatic Foreign Policy

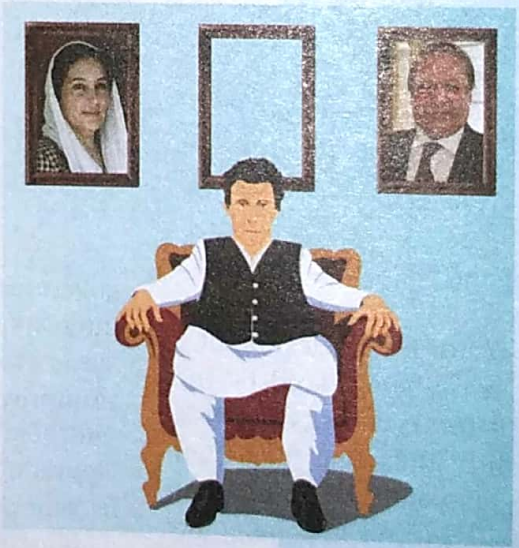


Foreign policy of Pakistan has gone through a remarkable shift in the recent years; a subject where the country has had to suffer humiliation and unimaginable loss of being a formidable, resolute and determined state. Contrary to being an ideological state whose pillars were founded on the principles of unity, faith and discipline; the country still awaits making up for the loss it has borne due to gross handling of the policies regarding its conduct of relaitons with the world. Pakistan's foreign relations have, in the past, represented a sorry figure during the the course of both democratic and military regimes.

Much of the international grievances that Pakistan faced actually date back to inconsistent, wobbly and fictitious set of policies in the past, and their far-reaching impacts on the country's reputation. Security, being one of the pivotal ambitions of Pakistan which is surrounded by a largely hostile neighbourhood, stands atop its foreign policy objectives, but with a new kind of mindset breaking through.

Many a great historian has shed light on foreign policy objectives of Pakistan, and how they have been shaped by the interplay of internal and external factors. Alliances with the powers of the respective periods, conjugated with the underlying circumstances, account for Pakistan's foreign policy outlook for most part. Naturally, given the strategic and geographic background the country is set in, enemies have come in harder from across the border, tensions have rushed ever since independence leading to devastating wars with India, and a pursuit of peace more or less accompanied by a gruelling war on terror on the part of big-power interests in the region, all such developments had a part to play and the elite's involvement proved to be a menace in the past.

In explaining such challenges, it is important to keep in view the turning points in country's external stature as well as volatility in the disputed Kashmir region, battle against the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan and the nurturing of the Taliban which proved to be a double-edged sword for Pakistan.



In August 2018, Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (Movement for Justice) rose to power in an unprecedented win in a political system dominated by two partiers for several decades. It would not be unjust to mention that he inherited a storm within every institution, particularly the most vital domain of foreign policy where there was a huge deficit that one would think was hard to be undone. The systematic decay of the country's international image in throes of a harsh political landscape, prompted even more by the 'do-more' mantra chanted by almost all American administrations, spearheaded a dreadful campaign against the country.

How the interests of the ruling elite propelled this notion to complicate, if not aggravate, Pakistan's international challenges, is still shrouded in mystery. As to how a pacifist Prime Minister Imran Khan, who was wrongfully labelled as a friend of the Taliban, well comprehended the ongoing war on terror by advocating for a dialogue, and how this sense gained ground at the top, among civil-military connection in this government, helps realize the mistakes made in the past, advertently or inadvertently.

Imran Khan government's inclination is towards restoring the global image of Pakistan through the aspects of peace and security, economic outlook, untapped, vast potential of tourism, and the promotion of national interest. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor which materialized during the period of former PML-N government as a symbol of deep and lasting Pak-China

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friendship has now entered its second phase of development where a transfer of technology and industry remains top priority of both governments to further strengthen the time-tested bilateral ties. As part of China's growing influence, the CPEC project manifests Pakistan's foreign policy shift in terms of choosing a trustworthy ally, as strong and formidable as the United States, having aligned interests for mutual cooperation.

China's fostering of ties with Pakistan is often seen as a diplomatic threat to India and its patrons, such as the United States and the Western countries, leaving a space for Pakistan to come up with a counter ally, i.e. China. Despite unrelenting false propaganda, cease-fire violations at the LOC, and continuous peddling of terrorism here, Pakistan's rise and its ever-growing cordiality in relations with the world's second largest economy is worrisome for India, and it also speak volumes

about an image in the phase of revamping.

Comparable to what used to be a routine practice at the floor of UNGA, PMIK's address to this august gathering of world leaders last year—his first as chief executive of the country—inflicted huge embarrassment to India. A wide impression of the speech was that it was thorough, sincere and composed, from advertising Pakistan's stance on grave issues like environmental conservation to the blatant thrashing of extremist Modi regime in India that has, in what can be called the most savage assault on the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), stripped the valley of its special status granted via articles 35A and 370 of the Indian constitution.

Later, when the US president Donald Trump reached India on his maiden visit, he kept it plain and simple during his speech. He lauded Pakistan for its efforts to curb terrorism and eradicate safe havens of terrorists. President Trump's approval of Pakistan and his willingness to work in close cooperation with the country was an impactful event and an 'obvious transition' of America's mindset from constant rhetoric of 'do more' to a peaceful relationship, an achievement regarded by most foreign policy experts as a success of Pakistan's deft diplomacy.

The world leaders and the international media too came along in raising their voice for the oppressed Kashmiri people which was also a conspicuous change that manifested how Pakistan chose to play on the front foot, clearly diverging from its restrained, defensive policy against the arch-rival India. Following the aggressive policy of Pakistan's civil-military leadership to exude a perception of peace and harmony, coupled with actions, the world started being more serious and contemplative of Pakistan's efforts in eradicating terrorism. There could not be a better instance to prove it than looking at the peace situation of the country which was once ravaged and ruined by war.

As of today, the world has set its eyes on the historic peace deal in Afghanistan, the epicentre of world's longest war between the inexorable Taliban and the mighty United States. Trump administration is largely devoted to evacuating the US armed forces that have been fighting a lost cause as it has finally chosen the option of burying the hatchet. Of course, the negotiation and peace talks would never have been a reality without the military sharing a primary input owing to its role as a strategic player in the whole region, and surely not without a government emerging on a centre stage of execution.

More importantly, Pakistan has now modelled its

foreign policy on a progressive, peace-oriented and intrepid footing, which is still principally influenced by the relationship with the US whose interests in Afghanistan have lately become a liability. Positively, with China ever closer to its side, the 'do more' mantra from America has started to gradually fade. Instead, having friendly relations with Pakistan is a desire expressed almost bluntly by the United States. The affiliation with China gives Pakistan a backing of a close friend in the time of need, contributing to strategic stability, internal security and economic prosperity, driving it away from the compelling requests for economic facilitation from the monetary organizations.

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Bin Zubair

More than seven decades after their development and use during World War II, nuclear weapons continue to be the basis for several states' national security policies. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) prohibits non-nuclear weapon state parties from developing nuclear weapons. However, the NPT exempts five de jure nuclear weapon states (NWS) (France, the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States) from this ban. These five states had tested nuclear weapons before the treaty was negotiated in 1968. This "exemption" is, however, countered with a legal obligation in Article VI of the NPT for the five nuclear-weapon states to fully disarm. Three other nuclear-armed states, i.e. India, Israel and Pakistan, have never joined the NPT, but possess nuclear weapons. North Korea also possesses nuclear weapons, but unlike India, Israel and Pakistan, was previously a member of the NPT obliged not to develop nuclear weapons. North Korea withdrew from the NPT in 2003 and has tested nuclear devices multiple times since 2006 despite international condemnation and sanctions.

Most non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWS), including some countries that once possessed nuclear weapons, are committed to remaining free of nuclear weapons. South Africa announced in July 1993 that it had developed a small arsenal before destroying it in 1991 to join the NPT as a NNWS. Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine ...d large arsenals of nuclear warheads and associated delivery systems inherited from the former Soviet Union to Russia in the mid-1990s, subsequently joining the NPT as NNWS. Other countries, including Brazil and Argentina, considered acquiring nuclear weapons but abandoned their programmes before accepting binding restraints on nuclear weapons development. Brazil and Argentina decided to join the NPT in 1994 and 1995, respectively, as NNWS. Many NNWS are party to nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZs) and have thereby accepted additional legal obligations not to develop, manufacture, stockpile, acquire, possess or control any nuclear explosive devices on their territories. Today, more than 110 countries belong to NWFZ treaties. Nuclear weapon-free zones are in force in South America and the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, the

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Modern world needs total elimination of nuclear weapons!

The alternative of multilateral nuclear disarmament and elimination is an idea as old as the bomb itself, but it has rarely been espoused seriously by the great powers and then mainly as a rhetorical tool to encourage political support for related but less ambitious initiatives. Recent well-publicized conversions of national security leaders to the disarmament cause, however, to say nothing of a new, more serious tone in pronouncements on the subject by many governments, including those of the nuclear-weapon states, suggest that support is growing for the notion that the only permanent solution to nuclear dangers is an agreement that would eliminate all nuclear weapons, verifiably, from all nations.

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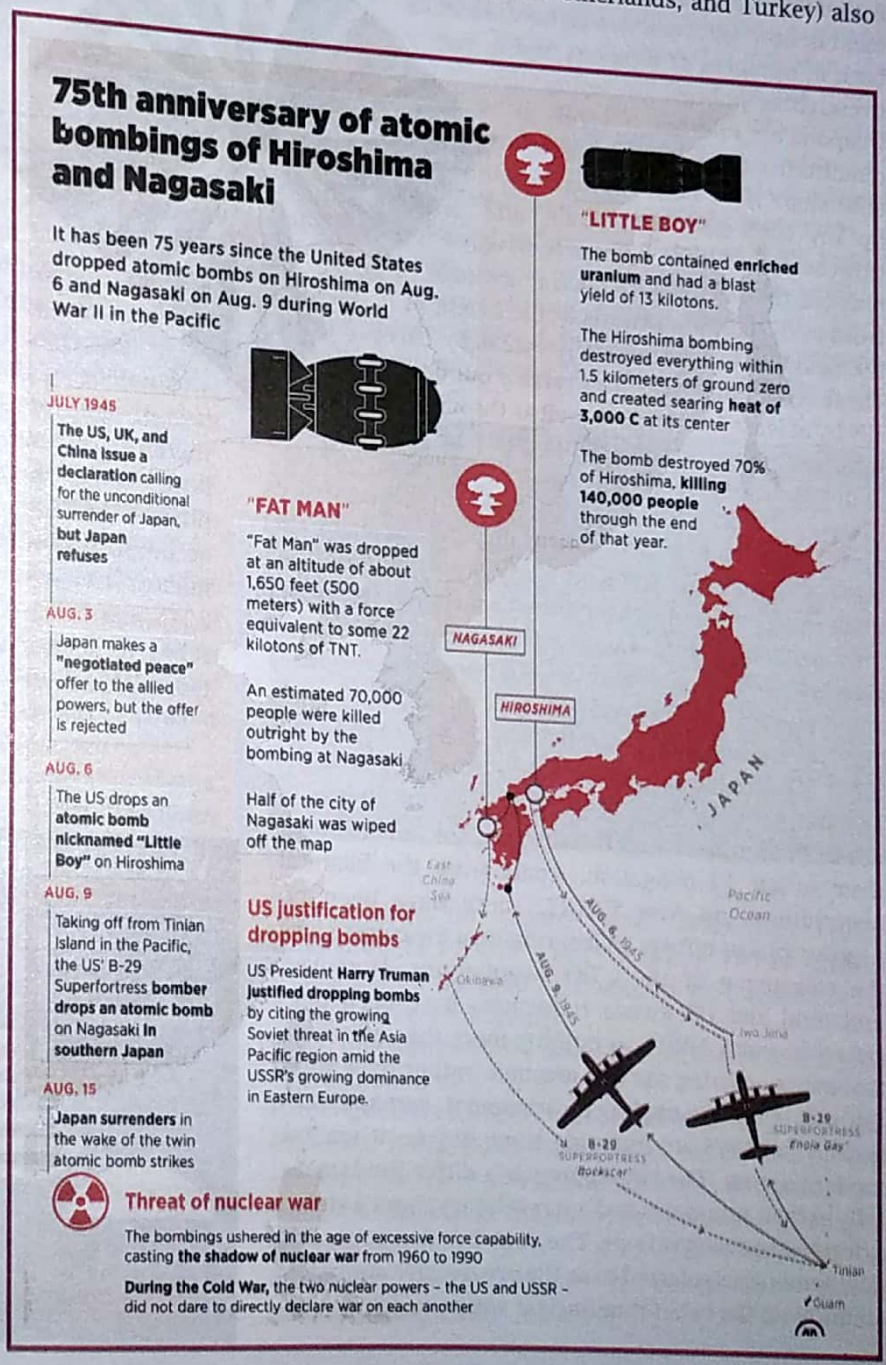
South Pacific, Africa, Central Asia and Mongolia.

At present, the twin risks of nuclear terrorism and nuclear proliferation are high on the list of threats confronting the world's major powers. Depending on circumstances, a single nuclear weapon exploded by a terrorist organization in a major city could cause hundreds of thousands of immediate deaths and untold sufferings to many others from injuries, radiation poisoning and economic deprivation. All major powers are vulnerable to this danger. An exchange between warring nations involving tens of nuclear weapons would be catastrophic, likely killing millions in the near term and many more over a longer period. Nor would the effects be limited to the immediate battlefield. Over time, the consequences would spread as radioactive debris would be carried into the atmosphere; the ill effects on the health of far-flung populations would endure for generations. Despite the enormity of these risks, national leaders have been unwilling to take necessary steps to deal with nuclear weapons. Other than occasional rhetorical flourishes, the community of nations pursues the same limited measures of arms control and nonproliferation today that it has for decades. Perhaps because nuclear weapons have existed for more than 60 years and have not been used in anger except for the two bombs detonated at the very onset of the nuclear age, most national leaders seem complacent about the world's ability to muddle through with the mélange of limited agreements and theories about deterrence that underlies current policies toward these weapons of mass destruction. But, the facts mentioned above give strong credence to the demand that nuclear weapons should be abolished

Attempts at negotiating legally binding multilateral nuclear disarmament treaties have proven challenging. The United Nations established the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral disarmament-negotiating forum in 1979. The 65-member, consensus-ruled body has only negotiated one treaty related to nuclear disarmament, i.e. the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) of 1996. Widely considered a milestone towards nuclear disarmament, the CTBT would prohibit all nuclear testing. Entry into force of the CTBT requires ratification by all states with nuclear power reactors and/or research reactors, known as Annex II states. Eight of these countries, including the United States and China, have yet to ratify.

Approximately 13,400 nuclear warheads remain in the arsenals of the nine states; approximately 4,000 of these are actively deployed. Five NATO countries (Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Turkey) also


75th anniversary of atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki
It has been 75 years since the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima on Aug. 6 and Nagasaki on Aug. 9 during World War II in the Pacific
JULY 1945
The US, UK, and China issue a declaration calling for the unconditional surrender of Japan, but Japan refuses
AUG. 3
Japan makes a "negotiated peace" offer to the allied powers, but the offer is rejected
AUG. 6
The US drops an atomic bomb nicknamed "Little Boy" on Hiroshima
AUG. 9
Taking off from Tinian Island in the Pacific, the US' B-29 Superfortress bomber drops an atomic bomb on Nagasaki in southern Japan
AUG. 15
Japan surrenders in the wake of the twin atomic bomb strikes
"FAT MAN"
"Fat Man" was dropped at an altitude of about 1,650 feet (500 meters) with a force equivalent to some 22 kilotons of TNT.
An estimated 70,000 people were killed outright by the bombing at Nagasaki
Half of the city of Nagasaki was wiped off the map
US justification for dropping bombs
US President Harry Truman justified dropping bombs by citing the growing Soviet threat in the Asia Pacific region amid the USSR's growing dominance in Eastern Europe.
"LITTLE BOY"
The bomb contained enriched uranium and had a blast yield of 13 kilotons.
The Hiroshima bombing destroyed everything within 1.5 kilometers of ground zero and created searing heat of 3,000 C at its center
The bomb destroyed 70% of Hiroshima, killing 140,000 people through the end of that year.
NAGASAKI
HIROSHIMA
JAPAN
East China Sea
Pacific Ocean
Okinawa
Iwo Jima
AUG. 6, 1945
AUG. 9, 1945
B-29 SUPERFORTRESS Enola Gay
B-29 SUPERFORTRESS Bockscar
Tinian
Guam
Threat of nuclear war
The bombings ushered in the age of excessive force capability, casting the shadow of nuclear war from 1960 to 1990
During the Cold War, the two nuclear powers – the US and USSR – did not dare to directly declare war on each another

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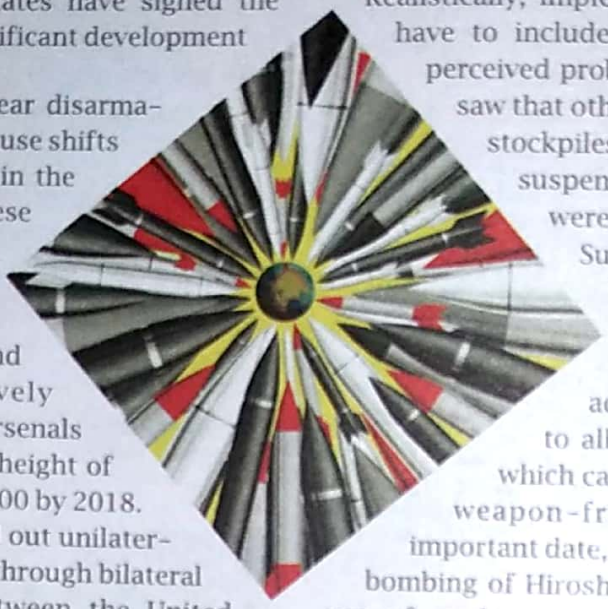
host approximately 150 US tactical nuclear weapons as part of NATO's extended deterrence mission. Large stockpiles of fissile material, including directly weapons-useable, highly-enriched uranium and separated plutonium, also still exist globally. On 7 July 2017, a United Nations conference adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the first international treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons comprehensively, including banning the development, acquisition, test, use, the threat of use and possession of nuclear weapons. Although no nuclear-weapons states have signed the treaty, the treaty's passage is a significant development in disarmament politics.



Estimating progress towards nuclear disarmament is, however, complicated because shifts both in numbers of weapons and in the overarching policies governing these weapons are relevant. In terms of quantitative reductions, measurable steps have been undertaken by key NWS both unilaterally and bilaterally. The NWS collectively reduced the size of their nuclear arsenals from over 70,000 warheads at the height of the Cold War to approximately 14,200 by 2018. These reductions have been carried out unilaterally by at least four NWS, as well as through bilateral legally binding arrangements between the United States and the Soviet Union/Russian Federation.

China is the only NWS that appears to be increasing its nuclear stockpile, albeit slowly. Experts estimate that India and Pakistan have been rapidly expanding their nuclear arsenals and capabilities. Pakistan's conceptual argument taps into the longstanding confrontation between the nuclear weapon "haves and have-nots." Paradoxically, as Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) members, Pakistan and India vocally support nuclear disarmament while simultaneously increasing their nuclear arsenals and delivery systems. Many NAM members and other NNWS believe that the NWS are not fully meeting their Article VI obligation. Apart from the bilateral negotiations on New START, there have been no negotiations or efforts on disarmament measures since the conclusion of the CTBT negotiations. Moreover, unilateral and US-Russia reductions have been perceived by many NNWS as nothing more than efforts to streamline existing nuclear arsenals, rather than steps towards complete nuclear disarmament. Perhaps most notably, all NWS are pursuing some degree of nuclear modernization. The two approaches differ fundamentally in their rationales and are revelatory about a state's priorities and motivations. The step-by-step approach, now sometimes referred to as the progressive approach, stems from the belief that nuclear weapons give certain states security and is presented by its supporters as pragmatic and politically reasoned. This pragmatism is set up in opposition to an "emotionally appealing" ban treaty that, the step-by-step supporters argue, would fail to confront the "real issues" at hand. Furthermore, proponents of the progressive approach often claim that since there are already provisions in place for nuclear disarmament, new instruments will detract from achievements and progress towards nuclear disarmament thus far.

Realistically, implementation of such a treaty would have to include pauses, so that signatories who perceived problems in the verification system, or saw that other states were not dismantling their stockpiles or facilities on schedule, could suspend their activities until the problems were resolved and yet remain compliant. Such pauses would be most important before the final steps to complete nuclear disarmament. To be prudent, therefore, one might add another ten years to the schedule to allow any glitches to be resolved, in which case the world would not be nuclear-weapon-free until 2045, a symbolically important date, as it is the 100th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, so far the only use of nuclear weapons in warfare. Conservatively, therefore, and permitting considerable time for the major issues to be worked out, it seems clear that if it proves possible to eliminate nuclear weapons, the task could be accomplished within 25 to 35 years, leaving the world nuclear-free no later than 2045 and perhaps as early as 2035. Martin Amis says: "Einstein's Monsters," by the way, refers to nuclear weapons, but also to ourselves. We are Einstein's monsters, not fully human, not for now."

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PTA vs the Internet

Sonia Magsi

Internet censorship in Pakistan is the mechanism to control activities at, and the contents of, various applications and websites. Looking back at the eventful war of Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) against the Internet in Pakistan, we find that owing to the presence and upload of a large number of un-Islamic, or more rightly blasphemous, videos on it, YouTube was blocked in 2008. Later, the PTA imposed a ban also on Wikipedia, Facebook, Flickr, Quora and some other sites on the same premise used against YouTube. Again in 2012, the PTA blocked YouTube in Pakistan for an anti-Islamic film made in the USA. In response to the constant banning practices by the Government of Pakistan, YouTube launched its local version for Pakistan in 2016, after which it was un-banned in the country.

If we talk about YouTube channels in Pakistan, the most subscribed-to channels are related to entertainment, education and news. According to the latest YouTube statistics for Pakistan, ARY Digital has the largest number of subscribers, that is, 15 million. Other top channels in this ranking are: Hum TV, Coke Studio, Geo News, Samaa TV and A Plus Entertainment. These statistics also evidence that the trend of watching news on television has changed with rapid evolution of YouTube channels.

So, imposing a ban on YouTube shall be an irrational step. But, two important questions arise here: (1) Do YouTubers really earn money from their channels? (2) If the government bans YouTube in Pakistan, will YouTubers lose out on their income?

Firstly, YouTube channels are specially created for personal and public or professional use. YouTubers can make money through YouTube Partner Program, according to YouTube's help article. YouTube displays ads on the videos of monetized channels. The ads that are displayed on videos make a major source of income for YouTubers. Certainly, they put in a lot of energy and hard work while creating videos on education, religion, art, business, DIY, food, lifestyle, news, opinion, international, entertainment, academic, online classes, and so on and so forth. In short, they earn money by uploading different content on YouTube. It suggests that they do earn a lot of bucks from YouTube with their videos.

As regards the second question that will they lose out on monthly income if YouTube is banned in Pakistan, the answer is a big No. As Norman Vincent Peale has rightly said, "Every problem has in it the seeds of its own solution," so, they have a solution for that as well. The Government of Pakistan and the public at large must be aware of the VPN trend. VPNs work as remote connections to unblock the blocked websites in a country. This Virtual Private Network helps internet users with unblock facilities. It doesn't matter whether the use of VPN in Pakistan is legal or illegal, people are using it in response to the banning culture of PTA. Surprisingly, the use of VPN

has increased for playing PUBG, which was recently banned by the PTA. In short, the use of VPN is extended widely due to the rigid behaviour of PTA against online money-makers in Pakistan.

Given this situation, will banning YouTube be a wise step? In my opinion, NO!

Banning culture hampers digital and technology economy. Moreover, it will make thousands of people lose on their earnings who do it through applications and websites in Pakistan. Already the unemployment ratio in Pakistan has reached up to 6.2 percent, according to the IMF. This alternative method to earn livelihoods must not be snatched from jobless people.

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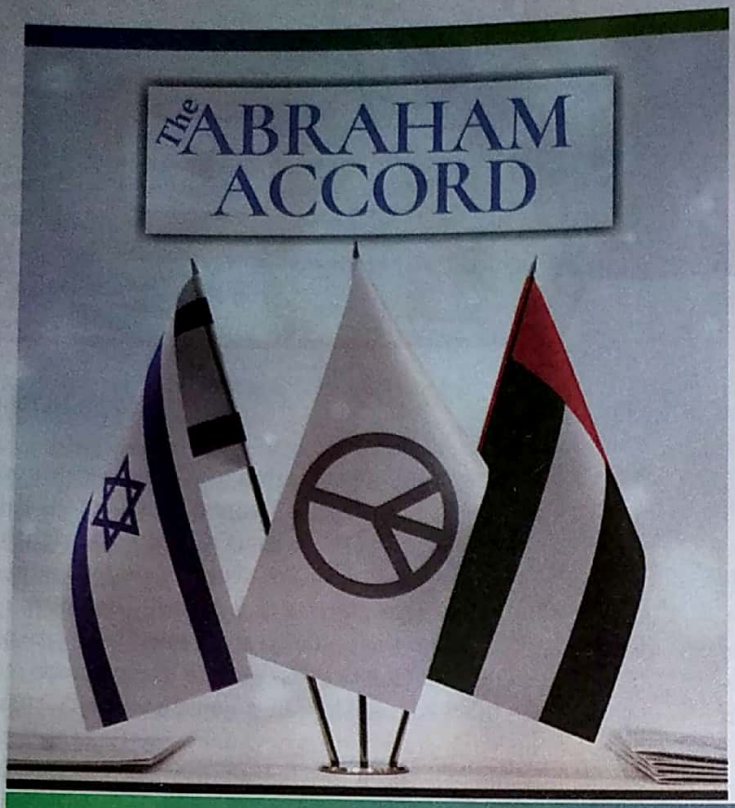

What a Thursday [13th of August 2020] it was. For one side of the world, it brought a blessing in disguise while for the parallel side it was a nightmare coming true. I can't move forward without crediting US President Donald Trump. He has hit a sixer on the last ball of the match. What a master stroke just before the presidential elections. He has overcome the apparent defeat everyone has been predicting because of the poor performance during the pandemic and on economy. Uncle Sam has achieved what the world leaders couldn't for so long.

TIP OF THE ICEBERG?

Zuha Tiwana

The so-called "Abraham Accord," basically is a peace deal between the United Arab Emirates and Israel after good forty-nine years of sour terms. Announced by Trump on August 13, the deal has proved him a winner in the international diplomatic arena. If the planet were a kingdom, President Trump would be its king right now! He has ensured peace in the West. He made clear deal for the Muslims to be allowed to offer prayers in Masjid Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem. The Israeli premier has been convinced by Trump to stop annexation of the West Bank, or Palestine. The Abraham Agreement is a path towards stability and peace for the Middle East.

A joint statement form the UAE, Israel and the US said: "This historical breakthrough will advance peace in the Middle East region and is a testament to the bold diplomacy and vision of the three leaders and the courage of the United Arab Emirates and Israel to chart a new path that will unlock the great potential in the region." The agreement was reached after talks between Trump, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Reactions

There have been mixed reactions on the deal across the globe. According to these reactions, it can be inferred that peace has a fair chance to return to the region, though the treaty itself has angered a lot of sections on both sides.

Arab countries

Egypt, being a close ally of UAE, welcomed the agreement. The president hoped that the deal brings peace to the region. Oman has also welcomed the deal as it would stop the annexation of Palestinian lands. Bahrain has described the step as "historical" and that it would strengthen the "stability of the region". Jordan conditioned the success of the deal with the future actions of Israel in the region. Overall, the Arab countries have given a positive feedback to the deal.

Unlike the aforementioned states, many have showed strong condemnation towards the deal.

Saudi Arabia, one of the close allies of UAE, has kept silence over the issue. Palestine has given a strong negative reaction by declaring the deal as a stab in the back. The Palestinian Authority said that the deal was reached in the shadow of Israel's plans to Judaize Masjid Al-Aqsa. Hamas, Fatah and Islamic Movement have also decried the deal. Libya called it a betrayal of the UAE towards Palestine as it did with Libya, Syria and Yemen.

Turkey

Turkey lashed out at UAE for the decision to normalise diplomatic relations with Israel. Turkish Foreign ministry said that UAE, by no right, can decide for the Palestinian future alone. Erdogan also mentioned down-swinging the ties with UAE and recalling its ambassador.

Iran

Iran's foreign ministry called the deal a "dagger that was unjustly struck by the UAE in the back of the Palestinian people and all the Muslims." Iran has labelled it as a

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"strategic stupidity" from Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv.

China

China has welcomed the peace deal by considering it a pleasant act in efforts to de-escalate the rising tensions in the region. The Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian said, "We hope that the relevant parties can take concrete actions so that the Palestinian issue can return to the equal-footed dialogue and negotiations."

India

India too stands to gain from the deal. Israel has always been a close ally to Modi government, and UAE, too, shares healthy relationship with New Delhi. Both coming together have paved the way for better diplomatic environment for India.

Pakistan

Pakistan has shown a very cautious reaction to the deal. Pakistan declared this development as having "far-reaching implications". Foreign Ministry said that Islamabad's approach would depend on "our evaluation of how Palestinians' rights and aspirations are upheld and how regional peace, security and stability are preserved.

Implications of the Deal

The recognition of Israel by UAE is just a tip of the iceberg. The real insinuations of the deal are yet to come. First and foremost, the peace deal has cleared way for more Arab countries to have strong diplomatic relationship with Israel in the coming years. The allies of UAE will most likely follow its footsteps in this regard.

The timing of the deal is also very crucial. In the time of pandemic, where the economy and health conditions are worst, the Gulf States will get a great assistance from Israel to combat the virus.

The tense relations of the Gulf states with Iran are also a crucial element at present. Iran has hostile relations with the West and UAE, and many of its neighbours will try getting tremendous military aid from Israel. The bloc against Iran will be more powerful and highly obstructive for Iran.

I can foresee an impasse in the cause of Palestine. The acceptance of Israel by the Gulf states is a clear message to the world that they are done with Palestine issue and need to move on to stabilize their respective diplomacies. Palestine will lose its years of struggle against the cruelty of Israel.

I think, sooner or later, Saudi Arabia will also join the alliance. It has no valid reason to stay aloof of the great bloc of the West and US. If it joins the alliance, oil export will be smooth and more mutual agreements could be signed with the allied states.

The Muslim Ummah, however, seems to be divided into two opposite blocs. Mahathir Mohamad said, "UAE-Israel deal divides the Muslim world into warring factions and in this the Israelis will add fuel to the fire." The deal will definitely prove to be a vote for Israel in its claim of Palestine belonging to Israel. A strong reaction by Palestine is also a sign of prolonging war in the Middle East.

Only three of the ASEAN member countries; Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei, have not accepted Israel. Now they will reconsider their decision and may turn the tables around for the Muslim Ummah. In general, this deal can bring a major setback to the Muslim Ummah because the Muslim countries will follow different directions and the enemies of Islam will leave no stone unturned to harm the Muslims.

Implications for Pakistan

Pakistan will be in a difficult situation after the deal. It couldn't have ruined its relations with the Saudis at a worst time. The peace accord means that US$ 3 billion debt struggle will worsen for Pakistan. This will, in return, damage the Kashmir cause. The peace accord is a direct red signal for Kashmir because the UAE and other Gulf states are now thinking of the progressive ways out towards better technological, economic and energy programmes.

Conclusion

To cap it all, ahead of the US presidential elections, Trump has silenced everyone with his achievement. He is virtually untouchable now on the matters of international diplomacy. Credit should be given to him as well. On the other hand, Pakistan and the Muslim world are apparently in a big trouble here. Moving towards peace and stability of the region at the cost of millions of Muslims and their sentiments can never be justified. And above that, it is just the beginning and the world has much more to see post-Abraham Accord. The hidden policies and deals are yet to be unveiled.

The author is a psychologist, writer and counsellor.

Israel and UAE strike historic deal

Israel and the United Arab Emirates have reached a historic peace deal that will normalise diplomatic relations between the two countries

Israel's Prime Minister ***Benjamin Netanyahu*** and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince ***Mohammed bin Zayed***

Bahrain and Oman may recognise Israel next, analysts believe

DIPLOMATIC TIES

Agreement, which U.S. helped broker, means UAE is to become only third Arab state to have full diplomatic ties with Israel

Delegations from Israel and UAE will meet in coming weeks to sign agreements regarding investment, tourism, direct flights, security, telecommunications and other issues

PALESTINIANS

Israel has agreed to "suspend declaring sovereignty" over parts of occupied West Bank. Netanyahu clarified he had "delayed" annexation, but plans remain "on the table"

Iran and Turkey strongly condemn deal, and Palestinian leaders describe it as a "stab in the back" by Gulf Arab country

Deal is foreign policy victory for U.S. President *Donald Trump* as he seeks re-election on Nov. 3, and personal boost to Netanyahu, who is on trial for alleged corruption

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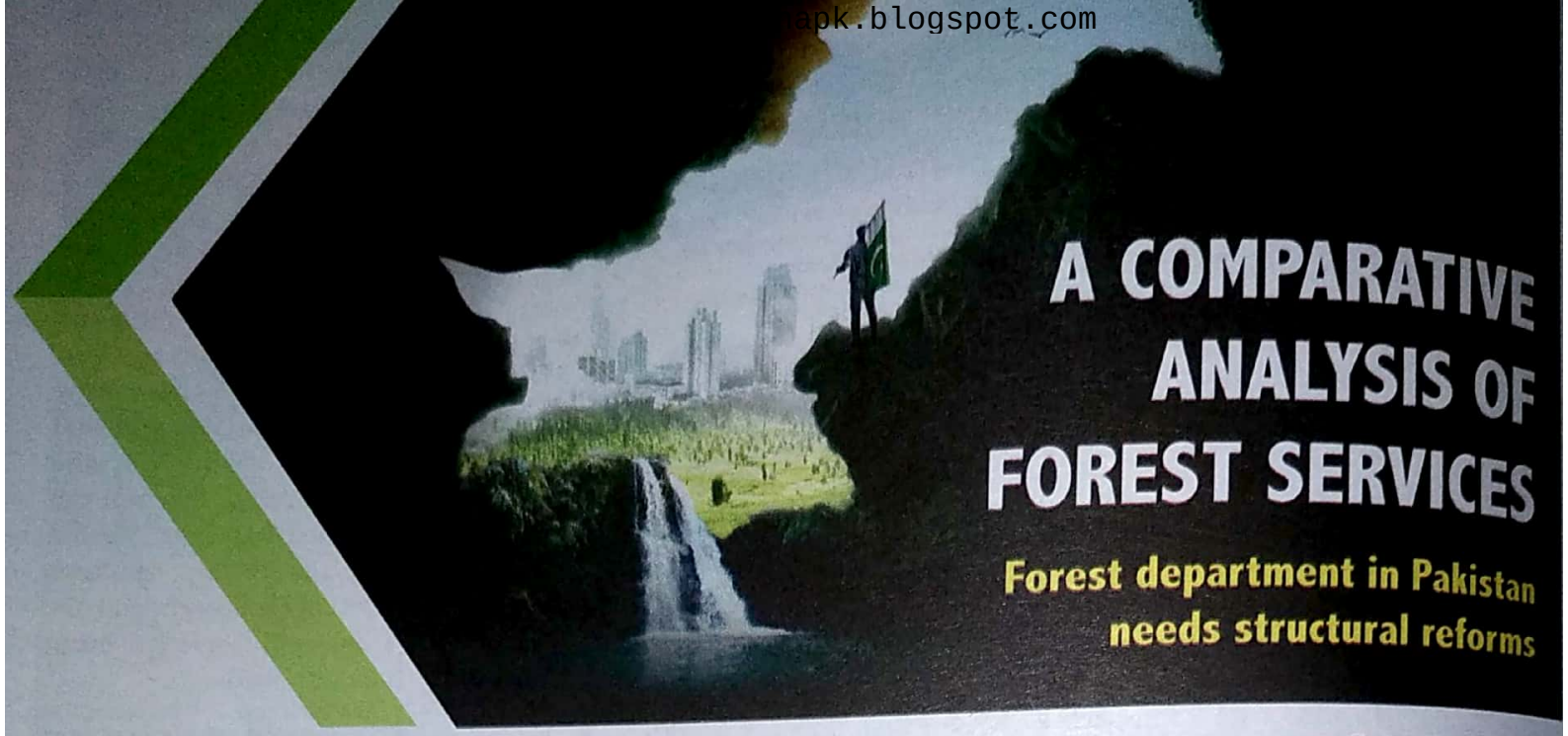

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FOREST SERVICES

Forest department in Pakistan needs structural reforms

Zain Raza Baloch

Forests are important because they create oxygen and are home to many animals, birds and other countless species. They also preserve the biodiversity. They provide ecosystem services that are critical to human welfare such as absorbing harmful greenhouse gases, providing clean drinking water, protecting watersheds and reducing or slowing soil erosion. The nations understand the worth of tree cover and thus, have been preserving their national forests through their respective forest departments. The rank and file of these departments are tasked to strictly execute rules regarding the protection of tree cover, besides working for afforestation. Hence, forest service of any state plays an important role in increasing the area covered by forests. Let's take a deep-dive into the forest services of different countries.

1. India

The Indian Forest Service (IFS) is one of the three All India Services along with Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and Indian Police Services (IPS). The main mandate of IFS is to implement the National Forest Policy which aims to ensure environmental stability and maintenance of ecological balance. An IFS officer is largely independent of district administration and exercises administrative, judicial and financial powers in his own domain. All top positions in the state forest department are held by IFS officers.

Nearly 23 percent of India's land is controlled by IFS officers. An IFS officer has a "quasi-judicial" responsibility. He acts as a collector and holds court as well. Under Wildlife Protection Act and Indian Forest Act, he can register FIR for the offences related to forest and wildlife.

The scope and importance of the IFS can be judged from the provision which says that IFS Officer can be deputed to Indian Administrative Service (IAS). This shows how IFS officers are administratively efficient and smart.

2. Bangladesh

Forest department in Bangladesh is headed by Chief Conservator of Forests. Then, there is a hierarchy of wings such as Forest Management Wing, Social Wing, Training Wing; all these are headed by Deputy Chief Conservator of Forests. The most important is Legal Wing that is responsible for legal matters associated with forest land and law enforcement.

3. The United States

The department head seat is at Washington DC and is purely responsible for enforcement of federal laws and regulations governing forest land. It comes under United States Department of Agriculture and is divided into two branches:

(a) Law enforcement, which is responsible for enforcement of laws related to forests.

(b) Investigations; there are *Special Agents* who investigate crime against visitors, employees.

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4. Forest Department in Pakistan

It is very disappointing that in Pakistan, forest department has never been prioritized by lawmakers. Political leaders neither mention forest-related plans in their respective manifestoes nor do they discuss issues related to it during assembly sessions.

In Pakistan, forestry is a provincial subject—unlike India, Bangladesh and USA, where forests service is a central subject.

Issues

There are different issues faced by the forest department. Firstly, the department has no legal wing and the officers have no "quasi-judicial" powers. Many times, other departments allot forest land(s) , by forgery, to their blue-eyed boys, darling officers and even to themselves. When forest officers file cases in the competent court of law through public prosecutors, they usually fail to achieve the objectives. It is an admitted fact and an unfortunate reality that without a dedicated legal wing, and depending only on public prosecutor, such results are obvious.

In most countries, forest officers have their "service gun/weapon" owing to the nature of the job. But, the forest officers in Pakistan have no such legal provision. They are dependent on local police, if by chance, they conduct operations (anti-encroachment) in forests.

Forest department is the only department with huge land of its own. The harsh reality is that most of the officers (Divisional Forest Officers & Range Forest Offices) have no government vehicle. In some cases, the Range Forest Officers have two-wheeler motorcycles. On the contrary, Indian Forest Service Officers have 4x4 vehicle (Mahindra Scorpion Jeep).

In each forest, there is a "block" which is an area of about 10,000 acres. These blocks are monitored by three or four guards (Foresters). How it is possible for few guards to look after such huge area without any weapon? Resultantly, money-minters and the influential cut the trees, and it ultimately leads to deforestation.

No concrete efforts have been made to increase forest cover in Pakistan. Some reports even suggest that natural forest cover has reduced from 3.59 million hectares to 3.32 million hectares. On the contrary, in July 2020, Global Forest Resource Assessment Report ranked India 3rd among the top 10 countries that have gained in forest area—India has increased 5,188 sq km of forest cover.

Forests formally contribute 1.7 percent and 2.32 percent in GDP of India and Bangladesh, respectively. They contribute only 0.43 percent in Pakistan.

On account of all these assertions, it is necessary to bring about structural changes in forest department. It is true that "where there is a will, there is a way," hence sincere political will is needed to deal with the issues related to the department. Proper legislation is required for reformation of the department and for this, sincere, true and capable political leadership is like a sine qua non.

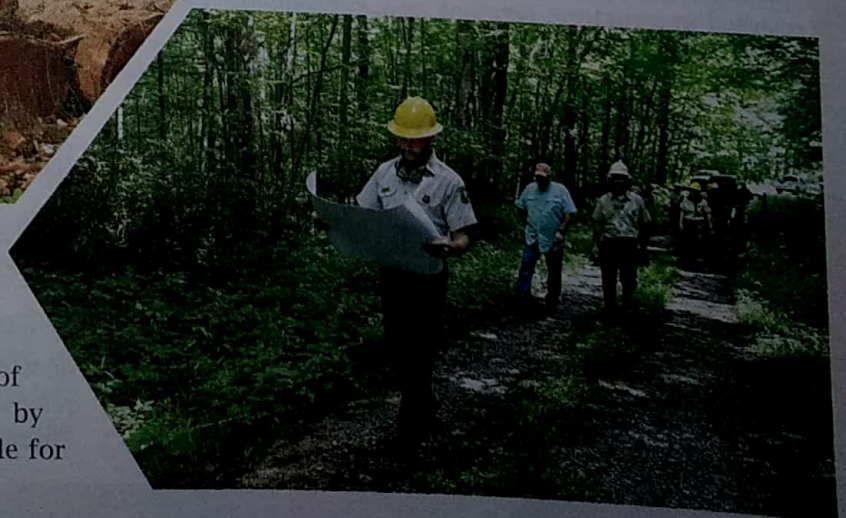
> "The trees we plant today are forests we enjoy tomorrow." — Matshona Dhliwayo

Like Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS) and Police Service of Pakistan (PSP), induction of forest officers should be made through Central Superior Services (CSS) examination. Moreover, since forest department is a technical domain, all posts should be reserved for forest officers, including that of the Secretary.

Moreover, forest department shall be made a federal subject and declared as "Force". Adding more to it, a separate survey wing should be constituted for proper conduct of forest land survey.

Last but not least, a separate legal wing and dedicated forest courts should be constituted to deal with the legal issues.

The author is a law graduate and researcher on international relations and Pakistan's strategic culture.



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THE THUCYDIDES TRAP AND THE

Roughly 2,400 years ago, Thucydides, a Greek historian and author of "History of the Peloponnesian War" expressed a view that resonates in strategic thinking to this day. He argued that the real cause of the Peloponnesian War was the rapid increase in the power of Athens and the fear this aroused in Sparta, which had dominated Greece thus far. Author Graham Allison used this concept in his book "Destined for War," in which he described the relationship between the US and China as an example of the "Thucydides trap" – the idea that the decline of a dominant power and the rise of a competing power makes war between the two inevitable.

Usman Ahmad

Thucydides focused his writings and analysis on the structural tensions caused by a sharp change in the balance of power between rivals. He pointed to two main factors that contribute to this change: the aspiring power's growing need for validation and its demand, either implicit or explicit, for a greater voice and strategic place in multilateral relations; and the current power's fear and determination to defend the status quo.

In the fifth century BC Athens emerged as a powerful force that in mere decades had become a merchant maritime power, possessing financial resources and wealth but also reaching primacy in the Greek world in the fields of philosophy, history, literature, art, architecture and beyond. This irritated the Spartans, whose state had been the dominant land power in Greece throughout the preceding century.

As Thucydides argued, Athens' behaviour was understandable. With its rising power, its confidence also increased, as did its awareness of past injustices and determination to right the wrongs that were committed against it. Equally natural, according to Thucydides, was the behaviour of Sparta, which interpreted Athens' behaviour as ungrateful and a threat to the system that Sparta had created and under which Athens was able to emerge as a great power. This combination of factors resulted in structural tensions and, subsequently, a war that devastated Greece.

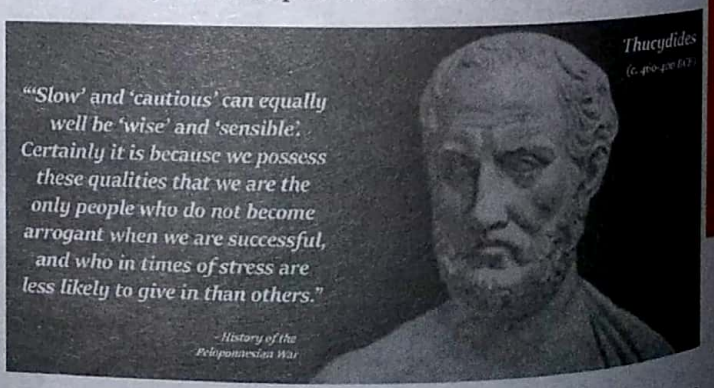
In addition to the objective shift in the balance of power, Thucydides drew attention to Spartan and Athenian leaders' perception of the situation, which led to an attempt to increase their own power through alliances with other countries in the hope of gaining a strategic advantage over their rival.

The lesson that Thucydides taught us, however, is that alliances are a double-edged sword. When a local conflict between Kerkyra (Corfu) and Corinth broke out, Sparta felt that, to maintain the balance, it needed to help its vassal, Corinth. The Peloponnesian War began when Athens came to Kerkyra's defence after Kerkyra leaders convinced the Athenians that a de facto war with Sparta was already underway. Corinth also convinced the Spartans that, if they did not attack Attica, they would be attacked by Athens themselves. Corinth accused the Spartans of misunderstanding the gravity of the threat to maintaining a favourable balance of power in Greece. Although Sparta ultimately won the Peloponnesian War, both Athens and Sparta came out of the 30-year conflict in ruins.

The Thucydides trap, which many now call a "security dilemma," can also be seen in the context of US-Chinese relations.

The United States is concerned about China's growing economic power and military capabilities, believing that it could challenge the primacy of the US and the existing security architecture in the Western Pacific and East Asia. China, meanwhile, is concerned that, so long as the Americans are present in this part of the world, they will limit the legitimate growth of Chinese power and influence.

Political scientist Joseph Nye believes that the key trigger in the Thucydides trap is an excessive reaction to the fear


"'Slow' and 'cautious' can equally well be 'wise' and 'sensible'. Certainly it is because we possess these qualities that we are the only people who do not become arrogant when we are successful, and who in times of stress are less likely to give in than others."
-History of the Peloponnesian War
Thucydides

of losing one's power status and prospects for future development. In the case of Washington and Beijing, the relative decline of America's power and the rapid rise of China's power destabilizes their relationship and makes it

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difficult to manage. Gen. Martin Dempsey, then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the US Armed Forces, even admitted in May 2012 that his primary task was to ensure that the United States did not fall into the Thucydides trap.

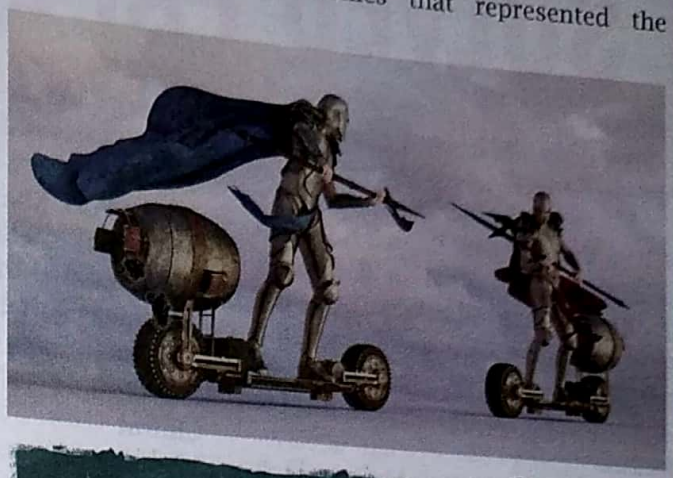
As a result of the slow but noticeable erosion of the US position in the Western Pacific, it is highly conceivable that a scenario could emerge in which the current hegemon is tempted to conduct a strategic counteroffensive in response to an incident, even a trivial one, in the South China Sea or East China Sea, believing falsely that it has the edge over its inferior rival. This would trigger a modern Thucydides trap.

An in-depth reading of Thucydides' work reveals a second trap, even more complex and dangerous than the first. Thucydides clearly warned that neither Sparta nor Athens wanted war. But their allies and vassal states managed to convince them that war was inevitable anyway, which meant that both city-states would need to gain a decisive advantage at an early stage of the escalating confrontation. Thus, they decided to enter the war after being urged to do so by their vassal states.

According to research conducted in 2015 by a team led by Graham Allison at Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, 12 out of 16 historical cases spanning the past 500 years and with similarities to those described above by Thucydides ended in a war of domination. Releasing the competitive tension, if that was even possible, always required huge and often painful adjustments to one's expectations, status and international position.

As Allison recalls, eight years before the outbreak of World War I, British King Edward VII asked the British prime minister why there was disagreement with his nephew, German Emperor Wilhelm II, when the real threat to the British Empire was the United States. The prime minister asked for an appropriate response in the form of a memorandum from the head of the Foreign Office, Eyre Crowe.

The memorandum, delivered to the king on New Year's Day 1907, was, as Allison writes, "a diamond in the annals of diplomacy." The logic within it was truly consistent with Thucydides' own: The key to understanding the German threat was understanding Germany's ability, over time, to deploy not only the strongest army on the continent but also the strongest fleet, given the growing strength of the German economy and Germany's proximity to Britain. Thus, regardless of German intentions, Germany would pose an existential threat to Britain, its maritime power and the security of communication routes connecting the metropolis with the colonies that represented the backbone of the empire.



Three years later, both US President Theodore Roosevelt and the German emperor attended Edward's funeral. Roosevelt, himself a keen supporter of the expansion of the American fleet, asked the emperor whether Germany would give up building a large fleet. The emperor said that Germany was determined to have a powerful fleet, and added that he grew up in England, felt part English himself and believed that war was unthinkable.

At that time, in 1910, world war seemed as impossible as it does now. But it turns out that cultural, spiritual, ideological and even family ties, as well as economic interdependence and the global trading system, are not enough to prevent conflict. Both then and now.

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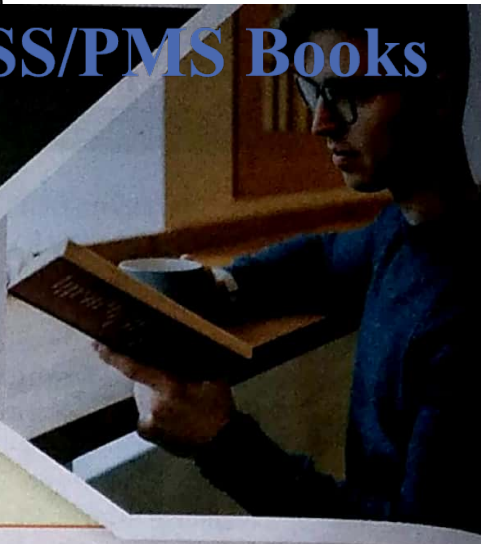

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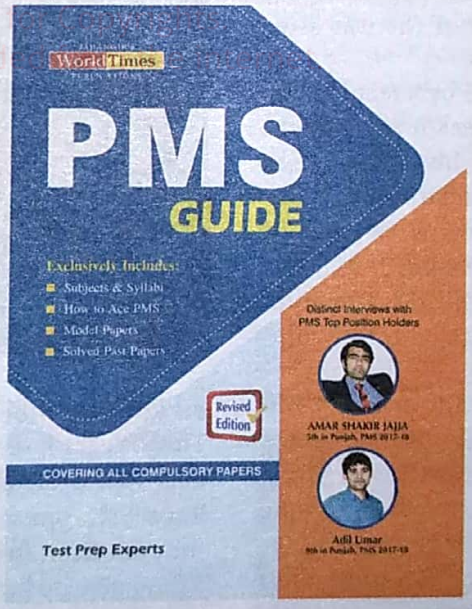
1. The Shandur Pass connects Chitral with: **Gilgit**
2. Karakoram Highway between Pakistan and China was completed in: **1978**
3. Tomb of Khwaja Farid is in: **Kot Mithan**
4. Nanga Parbat is the highest peak of: **Himalayas**
5. River Kabul joins Indus River near: **Attock**
6. The Chairman of National Economic Council is: **Prime Minister**
7. The first Muslim Governor of Punjab was: **Sardar Abdur Rab Nashtar**
8. Objectives Resolution was presented in the Constituent Assembly on: **7th March 1949**
9. The only Vice-President of Pakistan was: **Noorul Amin**
10. The minimum age for a senator under 1973 constitution is: **30 years**
11. Term of the office of Election Commissioner of Pakistan is: **5 years**
12. On the advice of Prime Minister and Chief Minister, President and Governor are bound to dissolve the assemblies within: **48 hours**
13. The only Muslim woman who attended Round Table Conference was: **Begum Jahaan Ara Shahnawaz**
14. The British sold the Kashmir to Gulab Singh Dogra under the Treaty of: **Amritsar**
15. Dr Abdus Salam, first Nobel Prize recipient Pakistan, got his PhD degree from: **University of Cambridge**
16. "Habba Khatoon" is a famous poetess of: **Kashmiri language**
17. Renowned Urdu writer Mushtaq Ahmed Yusufi by profession was: **Banker**
18. "Lowari Pass" connects: **Dir with Chitral**
19. Dr Ruth Pfau, the "Mother Teresa of Pakistan," campaigned against the disease: **Leprosy**
20. The United Nations General Assembly has declared the decade 2021-30 as: **The decade on ecosystem restoration**



21. The most benefitted sector of Pakistan because of GSP-plus (duty-free access to European Union) is: **Textile and garments**
22. The title "Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity" was given to Quaid-e-Azam by: **Sarojini Naidu**
23. The Quaid-e-Azam resigned from the membership of Imperial Legislative Council on account of: **Rowlatt Act**
24. "Wealth of Nations" was written by: **Adam Smith**
25. Statue of Liberty was given to USA by: **France**
26. Watergate scandal is related to: **Spying**
27. The article 3 of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs of UN) relates to: **Health**
28. The Treaty of Versailles settled peace in: **Europe**
29. International Monetary Fund (IMF) was created after the: **Bretton Woods Conference**
30. China have claim on part of Indian province of: **Arunachal Pradesh**
31. The political term "Shadow cabinet" stands for: **A group of specialized critics in the official opposition party**
32. "Deal of the Century" presented by US President Donald Trump is related to: **Palestine Issue**
33. The lengthiest written constitution of the world is: **Indian Constitution**
34. The word "REX" stands for: **The King**
35. Ho Chi Minh was: **Leader of Vietnam**
36. Continental Shelf limit of Pakistan is: **350 Nautical Miles**
37. Soviet Union was replaced by

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Russian Federation in: **December 1991**

38. Settlement of border dispute and signing of "boundary agreement" with China proved a milestone in the history of Sino-Pak relations. The diplomat who rendered his services to finalize the agreement was: **Z.A. Bhutto**

39. Kyoto Protocol came into force in: **2005**

40. Pakistan installed the first nuclear power station in Karachi with the cooperation of: **Canada**

41. The Quran and Sunnah were declared the Supreme Law of Pakistan under the: **9th Amendment**

42. *"Kapas ka Phool"* is written by: **Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi**

43. Hugo Chavez was the leader of: **Venezuela**

44. The Bolshevik Revolution took place in: **1917**

45. The Squash Championship Jahangir Khan won 10 times is: **British Open**

46. In 2018, German Chancellor Angela Markel was sworn in for: **Fourth term**

47. The World Water Day is celebrated every year on: **March 22**

48. India's current president is: **Ram Nath Kovind**

49. Pakistan's first ambassador to US was: **Abul Hassan Isphani**

50. Jabir Ibn Hayan is famous for his work on: **Chemistry**

51. The Pakistani scientist who worked under Albert Einstein was: **Dr Muhammad Raziuddin Siddiqui**

52. Indian population is _____ to South Asia's total population: **70%**

53. Sui gas was first discovered in Pakistan in: **1952**

54. The area of the earth covered by oceans is about: **71 percent**

55. The number of members (permanent and non-permanent) of UN Security Council is: **15**

56. SAPTA is a trade agreement by: **SAARC countries**

57. The brightest planet in our solar system is: **Venus**

58. The length of coastline of Pakistan is: **1046 kilometres**

59. Dome of the Rock is located in: **Jerusalem**

60. The number of SAARC member countries is: **8**

61. Official working languages recognized by UNO are: **6**

62. The second largest desert of the world is: **The Arctic Desert**
(All options given in the question paper were incorrect)

63. The country (from Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Israel) that shares no border with Syria is: **Iran**

64. Sindh was separated from Bombay in: **1936**
(All options given were incorrect)

65. Vasco da Gama was a native of: **Portugal**

66. The largest earth-filled dam of the world is: **Tarbela**

67. Arab Spring movement in Middle East started from: **Tunisia**

68. Timbuktu is famous city of: **Mali**

69. Three Gorges Dam is located in: **China**

70. Approximate fraction of the human genome that encodes proteins is: **2 percent**

71. In plant cells, the reactions that occurs in the stroma of the chloroplasts is: **Calvin cycle**

72. Stimulus intensity in brain is detected by: **The number of action potentials per second**

73. Cirrhosis is a disease that affects: **Liver**

74. According to science, the Earth is _____ years old: **4.5 billion**

75. _____makes up 14 to 17 percent of the skeleton: **Phosphorus**

76. The vitamin that controls the browning in fruits by the help of enzymes is: **Vitamin C**

77. Energy value of fats and oils is _____times more than carbohydrates and proteins: **2.25 times**

78. The milk needs to be heated for complete pasteurization at 162°F for _____seconds: **15**

79. Vitamin that is produced by body and is not found in fruits and vegetables: **Vitamin B12**

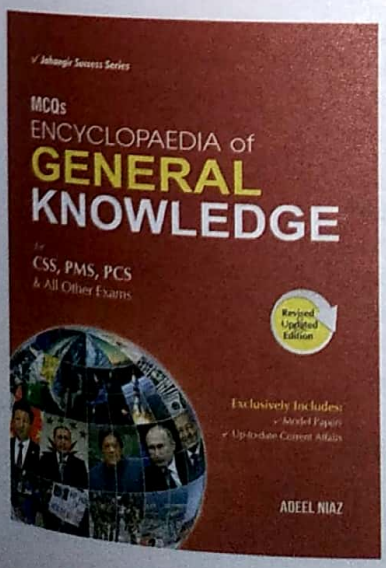
80. Coniferous forests have low biodiversity than: **Tropical Rain Forests**

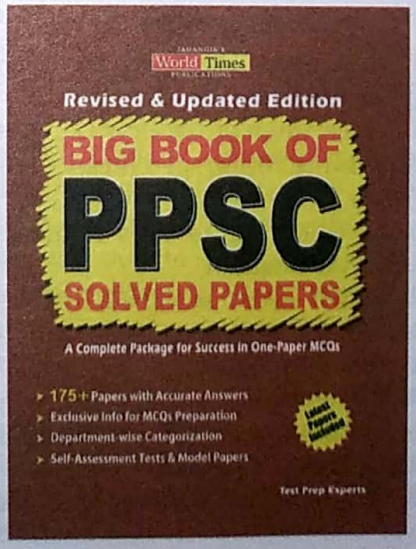
81. Rocks that contain fossils are: **Sedimentary rocks**

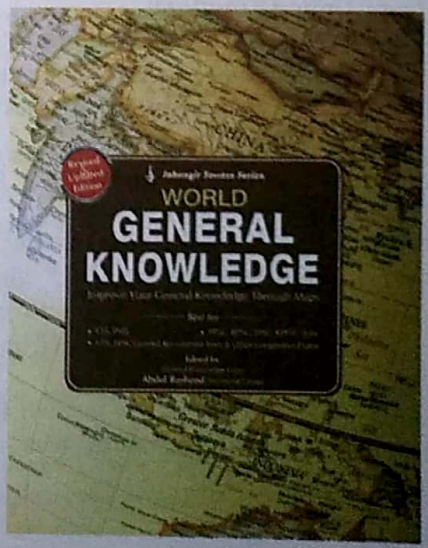
82. Depletion of the ozone layer is caused due to: **Freons**

83. Deforestation at large scale can be observed at: **Amazon forest**

84. The item (Plastic, Wood, Organic







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materials and Aluminium) that can be recycled many times is: **Aluminium**

85. Blank DVDs on which data can be erased and rewritten are identified as: **DVD-RW**

86. The person who gave the idea to combine the internet with the hypertext concept was: **Tim Berners-Lee**

87. The first mechanical calculating machine was invented by: **Blaise Pascal**

88. There are two different ways to insert content from one application into another, i.e. embedding and: **Linking**

89. The name for a web page address (from amongst Directory, Domain, URL and Protocol) is: **URL**

90. The function is a _____ which can calculate the values given in a specific order: **Predefined formula**

91. Average age of A and B is 30 years, that of B and C is 32 years and the average age of C and A is 34 years. The age of C is: **36 years**

92. Complete the sequence: 6, 11, _____, 27: **18**

93. In an examination, 1100 boys and 900 girls appeared, 50% of the boys and 40% of the girls passed. The fail percentage is: **54.5%**

94. Antonym of Segregation: **Integration**

95. The square of standard deviation is called: **Variance**

96. After the United States, the largest number of Nobel Laureates is from: **United Kingdom**

97. Operation Zarb-e-Azb undertook in the former FATA. Azab was the name of: **A sword of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)**

98. Study of life in outer space is known as: **Exobiology**

99. Which of the following (Archaeology, Anthropology, Genetics and Ecology) studies the interactions among organisms and their environment? **Ecology**

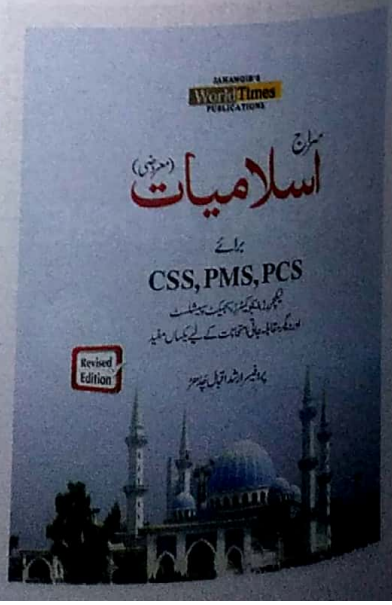
100. Wakhan Corridor is located to the _____ of Pakistan: **South-West**

Pakistan Affairs

1. Anjuman Himayat-e-Islam was founded in the year *1884* in the city of *Lahore.*
2. Muslim League demand of Separate Electorate was accepted in *Minto-Morley* Reforms in the year *1909.*
3. In the year 1916, joint session of *All India Muslim League* and *Indian National Congress* were held at Lucknow.
4. Post-Khilafat era had seen the launching of two Hindu movements *Shuddhi* and *Sanghathan* against Muslims.
5. In the year *1932* Communal award was passed and in the year *1935*, first India act was enacted.
6. Last Governor General of Pakistan was *Iskander Mirza* and first President of Pakistan was *Iskander Mirza.*
7. Pakistan became member of the SEATO in the year *1954* and signed the Baghdad Pact in the year *1955.*
8. Hudood Ordinance was promulgated by *Ziaul Haq* Regime in the year *1979.*
9. On 5 August 2019, the Government of India abolished Article *370* and Article *35A* of the Indian Constitution.
10. On *24* March, 2020 Prime Minister Imran Khan announced *Rs. 900* billion worth of economic relief package in the wake of Corona Pandemic.

Islamiat

1. How many Surahs in the Holy Quran? **114**
2. Which Surah of the Holy Quran is called the Umm-ul-Quran? **Al-Fatiha**
3. In which Surah falls Ayat-al-Kursi? **Al-Baqarah**
4. Which event is called Fath-e-Mubeen according to Holy Quran? **Treaty of Hudaibia**
5. Between which two groups Treaty of Hudaibia was signed? **Muslims and Kuffar-e-Makkah**
6. Who is called the leader of the women in paradise? **Hazrat Fatima (R.A.)**
7. Which companion got the title of Saifullah? **Hazrat Khalid Bin Walid (R.A.)**
8. Which caliph has the longest duration of caliphate? **Hazrat Usman Ghani (R.A.)**
9. In which caliph's reign the plague had spread? **Hazrat Umer Farooq (R.A.)**
10. Which Prophet's title was Rooh-ul-Ullah? **Hazrat Isa (A.S.)**
11. According to a Hadith, which act is called "Pillar of Deen"? **Salat**
12. When did the event of Mi'raj took place in the Nabwi year? **10th**
13. Vedas belong to which religion? **Hinduism**
14. Who is the author of the book Al-Raheeq Al-Makhtoom? **Safi-ul-Rehman Mubarikpuri**
15. Which two books are called Sahihain? **Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim**
16. What is the name of the tax that Islamic Shari'ah imposed on Muslims for the production of land? **Usher**
17. Who was the founder of Ottoman Empire? **Osman I**
18. Who was given the title of "Mujadid Alif Sani" in the Subcontinent? **Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi**
19. What was the field of research of Jabir Bin Hayan? **Chemistry**
20. Who is the author of the book "Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam"? **Allama Iqbal**



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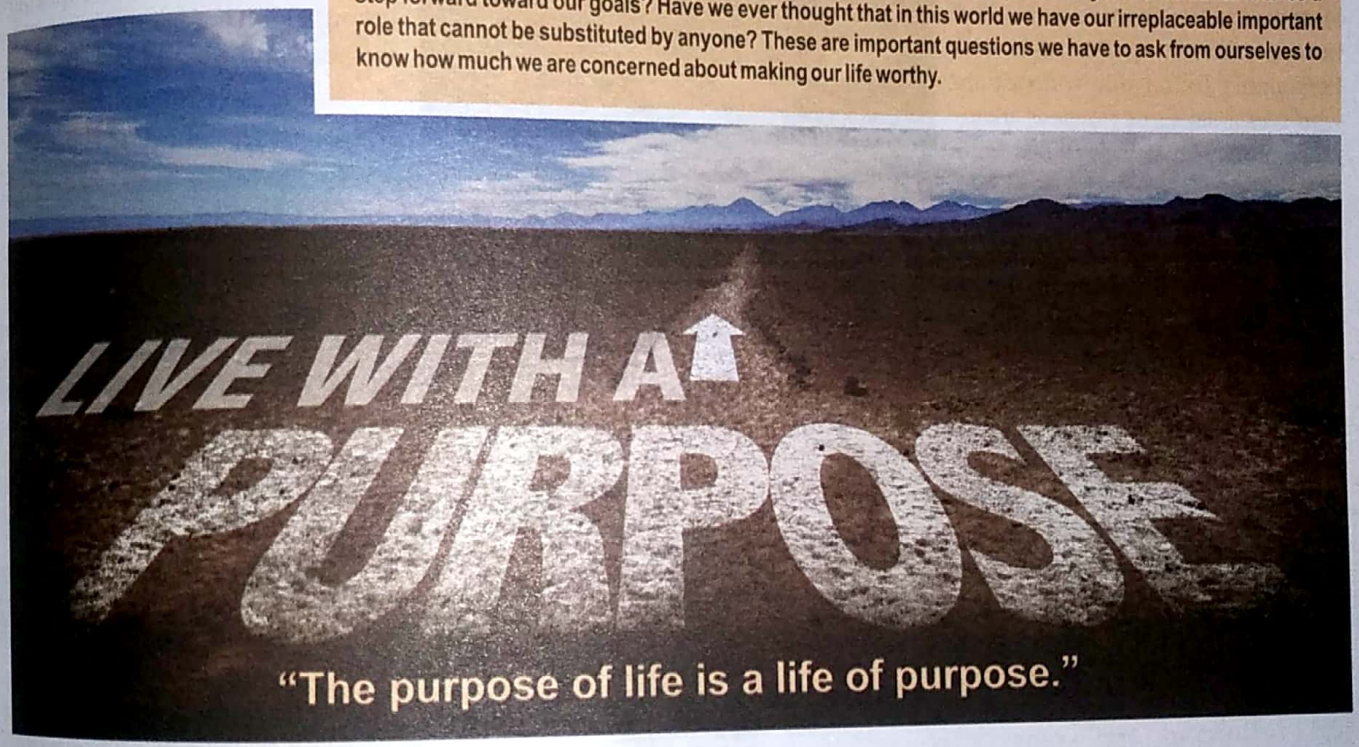
Maryam Ibrahim

Without purpose, life is meaningless like a long, tiring journey that has no destination and no rest station. Life is, no doubt, another name of suffering and tormenting. It is full of tragedies and heart-wrenching grief. Then, why should we choose to live in such miserable conditions, for no reason? Some people ask this question from themselves and suicidal thoughts arrest many of them as they find themselves helpless in improving their status in life. The facts that make us helpless are:

1. Unawareness about ourselves and our choices
2. Being less concerned with our daily undisciplined and haphazard routine

The combination of a successful career, a loving family and a strong social network may seem a recipe for perfect life. However, even those who can check each of these boxes might feel that something is missing. And that something is the purpose of life. According to a great philosopher of the French Renaissance, Michel de Montaigne, "The soul which has no fixed purpose in life is lost; to be everywhere, is to be nowhere." What is our purpose of life? What do we want from life? If we want something, then are we really working for it? Whether every single day of life we spend, passes purposelessly or do we utilize it to be a step forward toward our goals? Have we ever thought that in this world we have our irreplaceable important role that cannot be substituted by anyone? These are important questions we have to ask from ourselves to know how much we are concerned about making our life worthy.



3. Having no guts to be tenacious in facing hellacious asperities in following and accomplishing dreams.

Dr Jordon B. Peterson, a renowned professor of psychology, opines: "The purpose of life as far as I can tell you from studying psychology and studying mythology for years is to find a mood of being that is so meaningful that the fact that life is suffering is no longer relevant or even acceptable." To find a purpose of life and then to hold onto that needs mental adjustment to the environment we live in. Unless and until we accept the challenges that life poses to us, we will not be able to make our life substantial and worthwhile.

Life is actually full of twists and turns, ups and downs and dawns and dusks. The best way to live this unpredictable life worthily is to find joy in our downs, and keep feet on the ground when it's time to raise the head up. We have to keep emotions at optimum level, not to be overwhelmed by our triumphs and drowned in our failures because these two extremes distract us from moving towards something extraordinary. The latter, like a handicap, renders us immovable until we are swallowed by voracious waves of depression and desperation whereas the former fills us with superiority complex, and sets us in high rank of wrong perceptions about ourselves.

Time is constantly moving like hands of a clock, and life is changing its status every moment like rotating planets in the space. The autumn we see, once, was a blooming and beautiful spring. The old body was strong, young and beautiful just some years ago. The opportunities knocking at our doors were once waiting at someone else's doorstep. Time flies by taking away the spring, youth and opportunities, leaving behind only the woes of wasting time and living life purposelessly like varmints.

Every single date on a calendar shows us that every day we live will never ever be repeated. Then, how can we let the time go, without timely moving forward. If we really want to move forward timely, we will have to work for it daily and with best possible motivation. It must be kept in mind that our current situation is not our destination. Working slowly yet steadily, ultimately, turns fruitful for us. As

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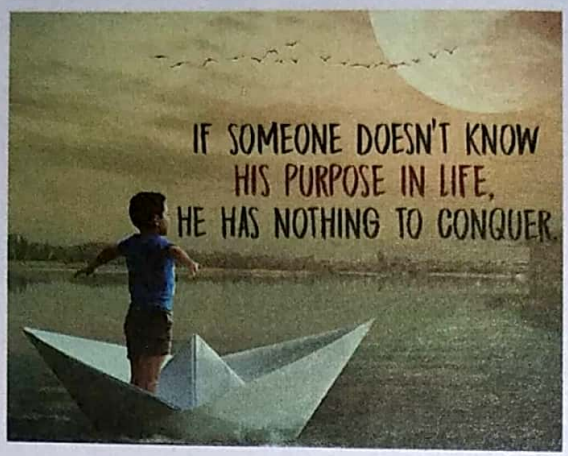
John C. Maxwell famously said, "The secret of your success is found in your daily routine," so, the need of the hour is to start thinking of one's current purpose and break the shell of temporary comfort around one's self to achieve the satisfaction in the long run.

Finding the purpose of life is more than a cliché or a dream that will never be fulfilled. It is actually a tool for a happier, healthier and better life that few people attempt to use. A 2010 study published in Applied Psychology found that individuals with high level of eudemonic well-being, which involves a sense of purpose along with sense of control and feeling like what we do is worthwhile, tend to live longer. Moreover, a 2016 study published in the Journal of Research and Personality found that individuals who feel a sense of purpose make more money than individuals who feel that their work lacks meaning.



Also one cannot name one's purposeless, all-time enjoyment as a complete and happy life because life finds its ecstasy when it meets its purpose.

We all are unique in our own qualities and our own presence. What one person can do by using one's own abilities, no other can ever. What changes one can bring to this world by one's own minimum efforts can be a part of big revolutions. There is famous quote attributed to the 14th Dalai Lama: "If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito." One should perform one's role by standing up against the unbecoming and declining behaviour of life, and create a purpose for one's living by utilizing one's own presence.

The following are some strategies that may help you find your purpose of life:

1. Fight procrastination: Doing something we have been procrastinating. First getting it out of our way will make us feel great.

2. Get active and kick out laziness: Doing something is almost always better than doing nothing. Of course, doing something would lead us towards mistakes, but mistakes are part of our learning process. We should get physically active to take steps towards accomplishing something.

3. Act positive: More than just thinking positive, we have to put our thoughts into action. Acting positively will ultimately breed purposeful acts.

4. Do something we love: Activities like gardening, reading books, writing, making videos and graphics and working with people, sharing and creating community, and so on will make us feel full of motivation to achieve our purpose.

5. Start thinking of a compelling future daily: Start thinking of a well-off future will, no doubt, act as a north pole of magnet for the south pole of meaningful life. That would attract each other all of sudden.

6. Know what the world needs: It is all well and good if we love making art out of lint but in order to make a purpose of life out of it, it needs to be in demand. Serving the world fills us with a sense of purpose and gives us a feeling of belongingness and being needed.

7. Find what we are good at: Doing what we are good at creates a sense of flawless purposefulness. This is so hard to learn, because this ingredient includes not only our inborn talents but also the skills that we have learned in our life. We need to believe in our own abilities, skills and talents for our life purpose.

8. Start listening to positive criticism: Being elastic enough to listen to positive criticism will help us in making positive changes in our behaviour that may help us not to go astray of our purpose.

9. Abandon the company of negative people: Despite having strong will for finding and following purpose, if we are surrounded by people having negative behaviours towards life, we have more chances of losing the longing for our purpose.

10. Be able to earn: Being able to earn money and make our livelihood on our own will boost our self-confidence. This self-confidence will feed our motivation which, in turn, will help us to keep our morale high while treading the path of a purposeful life.

The writer is an undergraduate student of medicine at Khyber Girls Medical College, Peshawar.

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"[S]uccess is the ongoing process of striving to become more. It is the opportunity to continually grow emotionally, socially, spiritually, physiologically, intellectually and financially while contributing in some positive way to others. The road to success is always under construction. It is a progressive course, not an end to be reached."

These lines by Tony Robbins in his book 'Unlimited Power: The New Science of Personal Achievement' beautifully and comprehensively depict success. Success is not an end in itself but a continuous process; a process to keep on relentlessly improving. It entails the process of learning, unlearning and re-learning.

Rabiah Noor

Success does not mean only a good career and financial stability; it is a holistic phenomenon that continuously occurs with improvement every time. It demands learning and growing emotionally. A man can be truly successful if he continuously strives to become a better person, and contribute productively to the society. Success entails not only intellectual growth, but also keeps on feeding your soul and nourishing and developing it.

I deem five steps to achieving success in all the above-mentioned forms.

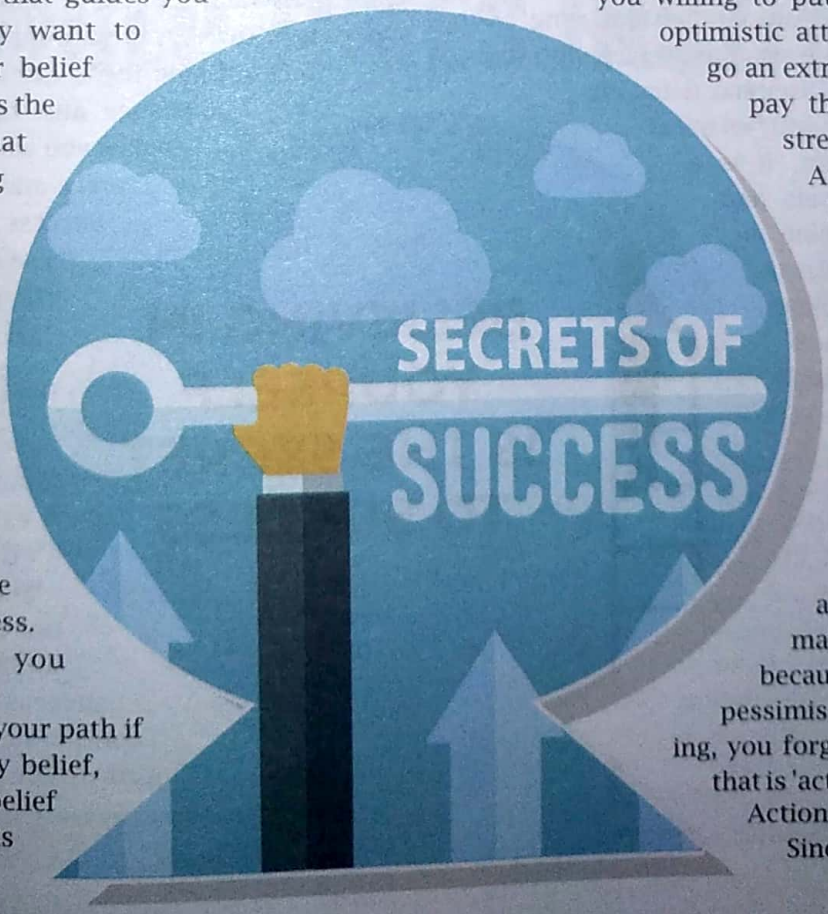
The first and foremost step is having a dream and vision. It is utterly indispensable. It kindles the fire within to be successful. It demands you listen to your inner calling. It has magnetic power and makes a person resourceful.

Everyone has inner voice that guides you about what you actually want to pursue. It sharpens your belief and lightens your path. It is the dream or the vision that ensures that something incredible can happen to you. As Paulo Coelho says in Alchemist, "It is the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting." Because only your dreams enriching into a vision make you experience the victory. It makes you able to savour the joy of success. A great vision makes you believe in your potentials.

A vision can only lighten your path if it is further nourished by belief, the second step. Having belief in yourself, your potentials and your persistent hard work is very important to tread the path to success. Belief does not let your direction fade. You must believe your intuition, your passions and the inner calling. As it is said "whether you think you can, or you cannot, you are right." Belief is having trust and confidence in your capabilities. It is actually trusting yourself even after falling for seven times, knowing that you would get it at eighth. Belief is continuously following your inner light despite darkness, even if the whole world tries to pull you down. It does not evaporate even if you have meager resources. A strong belief makes you determined and sets your attitude rightly.

The third important step is having right attitude. It means how you respond to your belief. As it is rightly said 'will beats skill', a right attitude determines your future. Are you willing to put in every effort with an optimistic attitude? Are you willing to go an extra mile? Are you willing to pay the price for your dream, strengthened by your belief? Are you willing to work harder persistently? Are you willing to sacrifice your desires to your duties that your dreams pose on you? Are you still willing to start again after falling when your peers have achieved their targets? These are the questions that determine your attitude. Your attitude makes you act, and not react; because if you have negative, pessimistic attitude to any happening, you forget to follow the next step that is 'action'.

Action is the pivot of the wheel. Since the path to success is to



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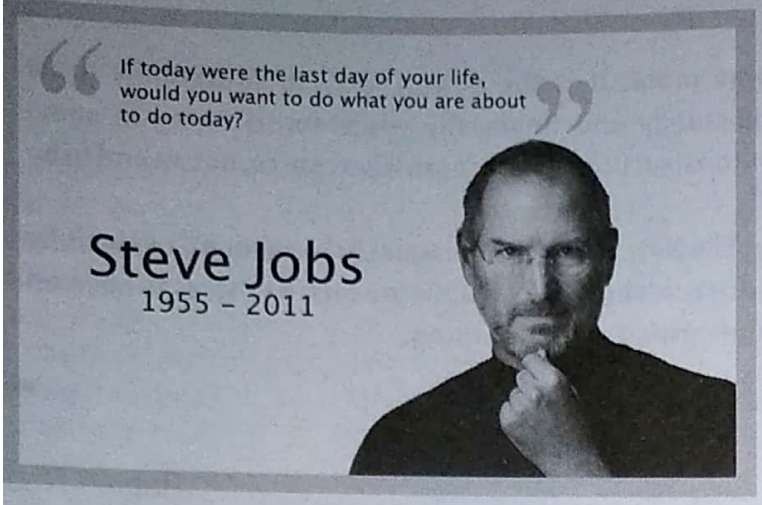
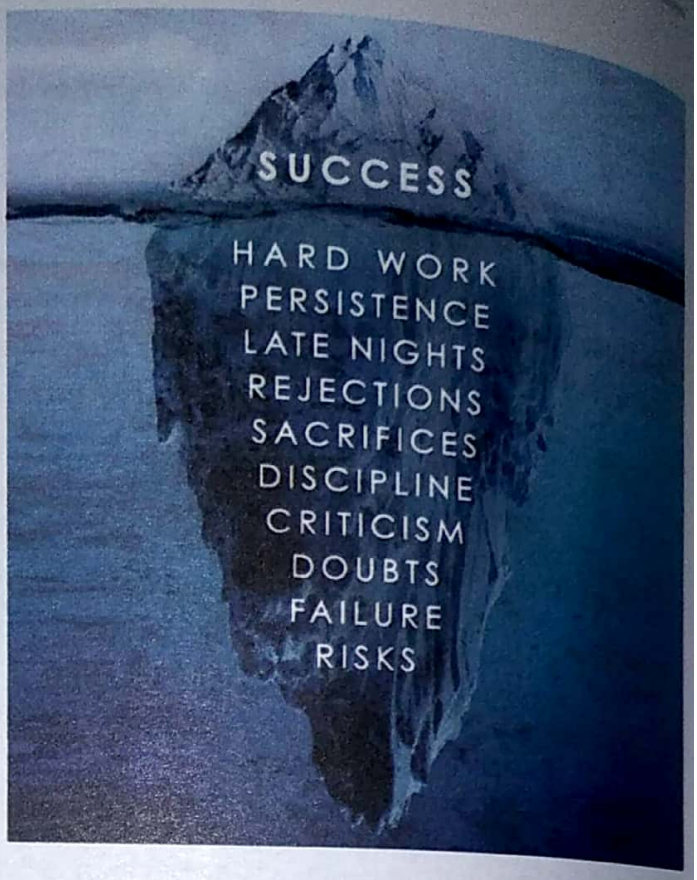
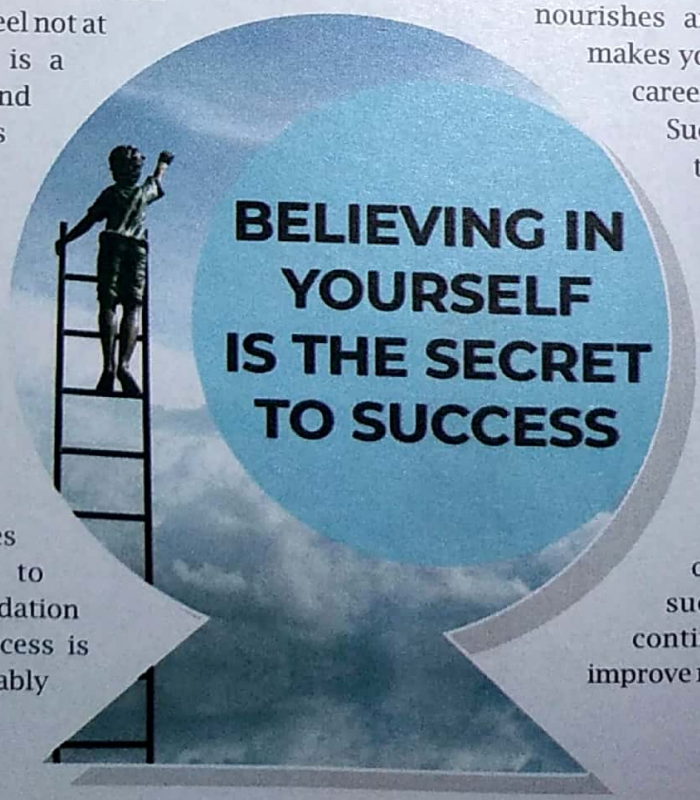




take determined and continuous action, you cannot just be lying on your bed and devising a strategy how to hit the ball to win the game. For this, you have to get up, act and play in the ground, applying your strategy smartly and with a right attitude. Action demands hard work. It requires you to continue striving for your growth and development in any field. Success is all about consistency and that consistency comes through action. And if you have positive attitude, your action will be right and productive. But if you have a negative attitude, your action would take you away from your goals, because positive action combined with positive thinking leads to success. It is said that the only difference between success and a failure is the ability to take action. And action must be followed with discipline.

Discipline is the last and most important rung of the ladder. It is to do the action again and again, with same right attitude and energy. Discipline demands you to continue even when you feel not at par with the requirement. It is a bridge between your goals and accomplishments. Discipline is the yardstick of measuring your success. Self-discipline means organizing yourself and consistently pursuing your goals. No doubt it is painful and hard, because it demands you to do continuously what comes outside your comfort zone. But, it, then, ends up in sweet reward. And discipline, in the end, shapes your character and exalts it to sublimity. Discipline is the foundation upon which the edifice of success is built. Lack of discipline inevitably leads you to failure.

I will conclude this write-up with the assertion that success is a process, a continuous process. It starts with discovering your dream and visualizing it. It is about believing in your vision and nourishing it with right attitude. Your right attitude determines your right action and self-discipline makes you continuously strive with persistence. And in all this process, one grows emotionally, becoming capable of controlling one's emotions and dealing with every situation pragmatically. This continuous struggle feeds the soul and makes it grow. It nourishes and develops the intellect and makes you a better person with beautiful career and financial stability as well. Success is the combination of all these things. Therefore if we start climbing these five steps of ladder religiously, we can eventually end up in being a successful person in a true sense. Former British prime minister and a statesman par excellence, Winston Churchill, rightly remarked: "Success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts." Therefore, success is not an end, it is a continuous journey of striving to improve more and more, and never relent.



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Yuval Noah Harari's Sapiens

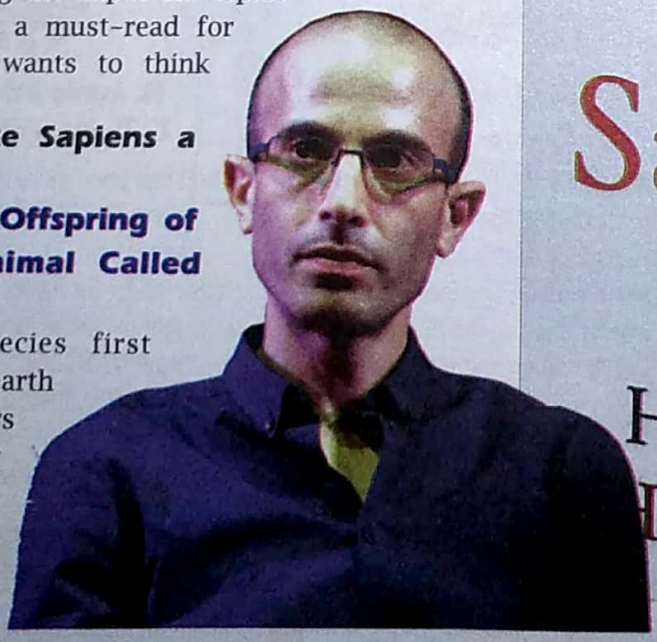
A Brief History of Humankind

This review was declared winner of the Book Review Competition conducted by World Times Institute

Reviewed by: Agha Shahriyar Khan

If you are interested in the most intriguing tale of all times: the story of humankind; if you are curious to know about the events that changed the fate of Sapiens from an insignificant animal to a hegemon of planet Earth; if you want to investigate the factors behind the emergence of language and writing, the arrival of various religions, the establishment and annihilation of empires, the rise of science and industry, then few books can quench your thirst of curiosity. "Sapiens" is one of them. The most intriguing part of this book is the puzzles which the author leaves open for its readers to solve. In short, this book is the perfect food for every curious mind.

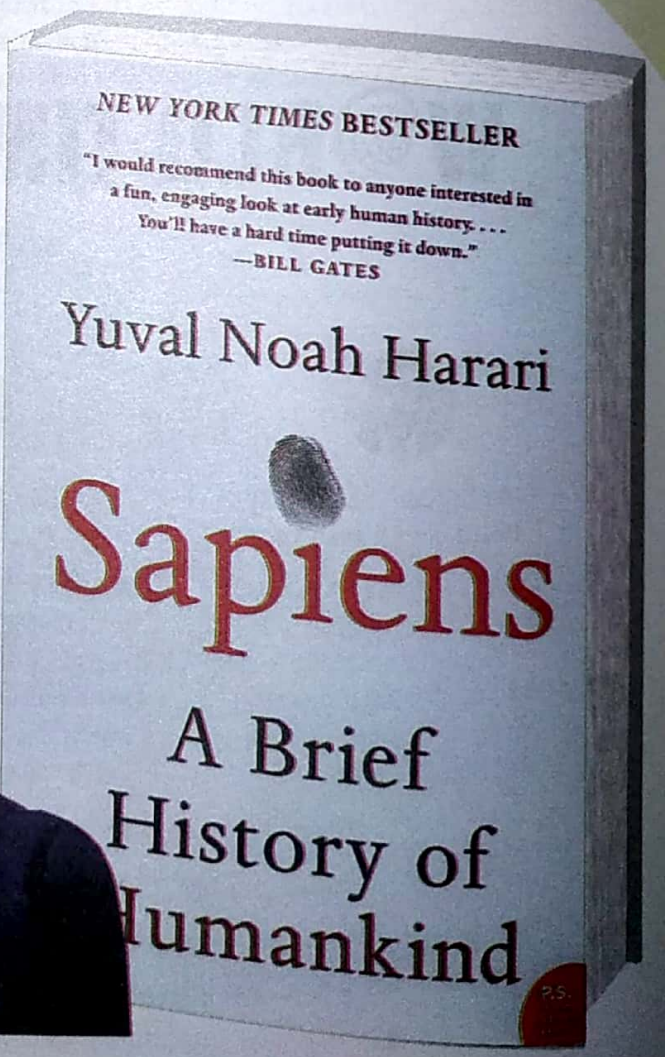
This piece presents the comprehensive review of this book by accentuating the important topics that make 'Sapiens' a must-read for every person who wants to think differently.



Topics that make Sapiens a must-read

1. We were the Offspring of Insignificant Animal Called Sapiens

Homo (Human) species first evolved on planet earth about 2.5 million years ago from the earliest genus of apes called 'Southern Ape'. Gradually, Homos spread to different continents and evolved under different ecological conditions. Consequently, world became the place of at least six different human species, and Sapiens (Wise man)


NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
"I would recommend this book to anyone interested in a fun, engaging look at early human history. . . . You'll have a hard time putting it down."
—BILL GATES
Yuval Noah Harari
Sapiens
A Brief History of Humankind

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was one of them carrying the earmarks of big brains and upright walking. Humans were weak and less intelligent as compared to other animals. As Harari writes, "Prehistoric humans were insignificant animals with no more impact on their environment than gorillas and jellyfish."

Now the question arises: why there is only one human species on Earth and what about others? The answer is: Homo sapiens replaced all other human species either by inter-breeding or through genocide.

Puzzle number one: Had this not happened, the world today would have different human species walking on the roads, trading with each other. Quite fascinating, isn't it?

2. Cognitive Revolution and Human Hegemony on Earth

About seventy thousand years ago, humans started behaving in a strange manner. They began thinking in an unprecedented way and started exchanging information using a language which was altogether new. How did this happen? No one can answer this question with surety, but scholars connected these cognitive abilities with accidental mutation in Sapiens' DNA. But the more important thing was that the Sapiens used these abilities to alter their fate: they started making tools, exchanging ideas and carrying out complex tasks. They also exchanged information even about the things which did not exist, like family, tribe, clan, etc. Consequently, human cooperation and social bonding increased manifolds. The author writes, "The real difference between us and chimpanzees is the mythical glue that bonds together large number of individuals, families and groups. This glue has made us the master of creation."

Puzzle number two: Imagine if humans speak only about the things which exist, like rivers, trees, lions, etc., would there be any difference between us and other animals?

3. Agricultural Revolution: History's Biggest Achievement or History's Biggest Fraud?

About 1000 years ago, Homo sapiens started planting wheat and domesticating animals. This was the commencement of agricultural revolution. There are many theories behind this miracle, but all are debatable. The main question is whether this revolution made Homo sapiens more secure and affluent. Harari claims that agricultural revolution was a miscalculation; it neither ensured economic security nor guaranteed physical security of humans. The same people who ate every type of animal now became dependent on crops. Hence, changes in climatic conditions and river flows caused famines and plagues. Besides, permanent settlement triggered new diseases and bloody wars. However, there were various advantages of this revolution: emergence of society and culture, safety from wild animals and harsh weather, and subsistence of larger human populations. But the author undermines the merits by saying, "This is the essence of agricultural revolution: ability to keep more people under worse conditions."

Puzzle number three: If conditions were harsh, why humans did not reverse to hunting and gathering?

4. Establishment of Imagined Orders: A Cobweb of Fictional Stories and Contradictions

When families converted into tribes and tribes into empires, humans needed some order to manage their socio-political affairs. Hence, they created imagined orders and implemented them believing that these were divine laws. For instance, they divided the people into genders, castes, classes and races, and then formed a distinguished set of norms and values for each segment of society. This set of rules brought social order—it was far from perfection, though. Remember, it was all imagination. Nature does not divide humankind into classes, genders and races. Nature does not establish any norms and values. It was all created by humans. Since it was unnatural order, external forces (e.g. police, army, judiciary) were required to implement it.

Similarly, the contemporary order is also a set of contradictions. It is also based on myths we consider divine or universal. For instance, the current world order is based on the principle of equality and liberty. But both these terms contradict each other. If you want to establish equality, you have to restrict the liberty of people (e.g. Communism). Similarly, if you give people full liberty, equality will be, then, impossible (e.g. Capitalism). Equality, liberty, etc. all are myths. Human have different DNAs, different capabilities and intelligence.

The author summarizes this argument thus, "We believe in particular order not because it is objectively true, but because believing in it, enables us to cooperate, effectively and forge a better society. Imagined orders are not evil conspiracies or useless mirages. Rather, they are the only way a large number of humans can cooperate effectively."

Puzzle number four: If we accept that the current order is fictional, why are we following it? Is any alternate we possible?

5. Arrival of Writing and Money

Between 3500BC and 3000 BC, the Sumerians started

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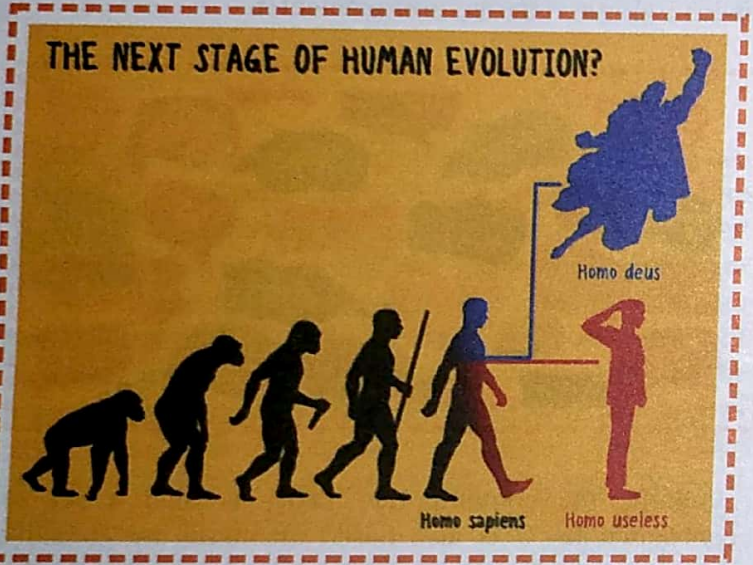
writing facts when their memories became overloaded with data. They needed to store the information of land rights, disputes, salaries of servants, number of armed forces, etc. Hence, they started writing it through partial script and then through full script. Gradually, other cultures developed good techniques of archiving, cataloguing and retrieving written records.

Similarly, the humans invented money (in barley, silver or coins) to overcome the limitations of barter. Money enabled them to remember the exchange rate by converting anything to money. This solved the problem. The author writes, "With money as an alchemist, you can turn land into loyalty, justice into health, and violence into knowledge."

6. Autopsy of Imperial History

Had all Empires had evil designs? Had they left anything productive? What is imperial cycle? Could we divide the imperial history between good cops and bad cops? And



finally, what exactly the nature of empire was, and what constituted it? These are the questions which Harari addresses in this portion of the book in order to do autopsy of 2500-year-long history of Empires.

According to him, two traits constitute an empire: cultural diversity and border flexibility. Besides, refuting the claim that empires were only the industries of destruction and exploitation, Harari proves that empires left rich and enduring legacies by accentuating cultural feats, architectural wonders, philosophical achievements and development of various languages during their reigns. He writes, "Even if we look beyond elite culture and focus instead on the world of common people, we find imperial legacies in majority of modern culture."

The author also describes imperial cycle by highlighting ts various stages. According to him, the life of an empire egins when a small number of people establish it; like omans and Europeans established their empires. Consequently, these imperialists forged an empirical culture (i.e. Graeco-Roman or Western culture) which subsequently was adopted by inhabitants. Later, the subjects of the empire demanded equal status in the name of imperial values (e.g. Indians demanded equal status with Europeans). Finally, as the borders stretched, founders of the empires lost their dominance. Harari eloquently summarizes this argument by writing, "There is no justice in history. Most past cultures have sooner or later fallen prey to enemies of some ruthless empire, which they consigned them to oblivion. Empires too, ultimately fall, but they left rich legacies."

Harari, finally, makes his last point in this debate by writing that it is almost impossible to divide imperial history into good and bad empires. The reason is simple: it is too intricate to divide. For instance, people of modern India view the British imperialists as bad guys and remember their reign as most unjust and oppressive era for Indians. If this metric of bad empire is accepted, then what their behaviour should be towards the mighty Mughals. Should they see the Taj Mahal in the similar way: the sign of imperial deigns by looting lower strata of Indians? If yes, then shouldn't their behaviour be same towards all empires be it Delhi Sultanate or the ancient Mauryan empire? If yes, then who was the good man in this imperial history? It is complex, isn't it? Therefore, Harari writes, "Simplistically dividing the past into bad and good guys leads (you) nowhere."

7. An Interesting Tale of Religions

The book of history cannot be completed without delineating the interesting story of the religions of the world, and Harari did his best to narrate this beautiful tale in his own remarkable style. This roller-coaster story originated from animalist beliefs and then reached at the doors of polytheism. Subsequently, monotheism brought a major shift in its direction by superseding all other beliefs. Finally, humanity arrived at the corridors of humanistic religions where human, and nothing else, was considered sacrosanct.

Harari did not end this tale here. He has tried to answer many 'whys' of this story: Why did people move from animalism to polytheism? Why and how did monotheism supersede other religious doctrines? And why have we converted the flesh-bound humans into something special?

The real intriguing part of this story is in Harari's efforts to discover the true nature of god: good or evil. According to Harari, if the god is good, then why there is so much chaos, conflict, calamities, massacre, bloodshed, hunger, poverty and inequality in this world. On the other hand, if there were any evil force working against god, why there is an order in this universe. Harari writes, "Monotheism explains order, but it is mystified by evil. Dualism explains evil but it is puzzled by order". It is confusing, isn't it?

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Puzzle number five: Then, what is the exact nature of God?

8. Dawn of the Modern World

The sun of the modern world rose when humans accepted their ignorance and began doubting every universal truth. This triggered the scientific revolution. People considered that whatever the wiser gods or wiser people of past did not bother to tell us was unimportant. Science had changed this way of thinking. Consequently, humans unearthed the mysteries of cosmos, invented the miracles and discovered the hidden treasures of the Earth. Science also materialized the prediction of Francis Bacon: "Knowledge is power". Science provided the technological fodder to imperialism and, in return, imperialists supported scientific projects and spread scientific thinking to far center of the world. Capitalism and industrialization were the two other earmarks of modern era which evolved owing to imperialism to some extent and human intelligence to larger extent. This had changed the world forever.

9. Are Human Beings Happier Today than They were in Their Hunting-Gathering Societies?

After discussing the feasts of modern world, Harari raises the most important question of this book: Are we happier than our hunter-gatherer forefathers? To answer this question, he raises the debate about the subject of happiness: What is the exact nature of happiness? How can we tell that we are happy or sad? How do we count happiness?

In this perspective, Harari explores many venues. For instance, if we take happiness in its objective sense, we measure it on the basis of property, wealth, self-determination. But, for many people, family and community give more happiness and money. Others value love more than anything. So, we can say that happiness is the correlation between objective conditions and subjective expectations. Harari, writes: "When things improve, expectations balloon, and consequently even dramatic improvements in objective conditions can leave us dissatisfied. When things deteriorate, expectations shrink, and consequently even a severe illness might leave you pretty happy as much as happy as you were before." Similarly, he measures happiness from the prism of meaning of life. This begs the question: what the meaning of life is? Different religions and social orders define it differently. For instance, for liberalism, knowing thyself is the ultimate meaning of life and real source of happiness. Similarly, for Buddhism, the meaning of life is to accept your feelings just the way they are, and stop craving about anything. In short, Harari explores various approaches, and tries to unearth the basic question: Are we really happy?

10. Homo Sapiens become Homo Deus

In the last part of book, Harari analyzes the contemporary socio-political and technological dynamics and predicts the future. According to him, biological engineering, cyborg technology and engineering of inorganic life will capacitate the Homo sapiens to upgrade their muscles, intelligence, cognition, speed, vision and other abilities. In short, this technological evolution will turn them into super humans who will control everything. But the question is, with all that godly characteristics, will we decrease the amount of suffering in this world? Will we control our lust for power? The prospects are grimmer. Harari writes, "[I]s there anything more dangerous than dissatisfied and irresponsible gods who don't know what they want?"

Conclusion

In a nutshell, the book Sapiens does not narrate only the history of mankind, it also pushes its readers to think, to ponder and to analyze the facts, and answer some basic questions. This book takes its readers by hand and shows them the landmarks of the past. It has great personal appeal for the readers: man calling to men, the living knowing the dead, the present seeing the past. Therefore, it is a must-read for anyone who wants to learn how to think critically. As the author says, "We study history not to know the future, but to widen our horizons, to understand that our present situation is neither natural nor inevitable, and that we consequently have many more possibilities before us than we imagine."

The reviewer is a CSS 2019 qualifier and an industrial and manufacturing engineer. He can be reached at: aghashahriyark@gmail.com

HAPPINESS IS NOT THE SURPLUS OF PLEASANT OVER UNPLEASANT MOMENTS. RATHER, HAPPINESS CONSISTS IN SEEING ONE'S LIFE IN ITS ENTIRETY AS MEANINGFUL AND WORTHWHILE.

—YUVAL NOAH HARARI

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WORLD IN FOCUS

NATIONAL

M. Usman Butt

July 16: Two Pakistani women, Asia Jamil and Tabassum Adnan, made it to the list of ten finalists for the inaugural Women Building Peace Award, announced by the US Institute of Peace (USIP).

July 16: Pakistan provided New Delhi's diplomats uninterrupted consular access to RAW spy Kulbhushan Jadhav for a second time.

July 16: The United States and Pakistan signed a legal framework to prevent international child abduction.

What is International parental child abduction?

International parental child abduction is the removal or retention of a child outside their country of habitual residence in breach of another parent or guardian's custody rights. The UN and human rights organisations regard this as child abuse and an extreme form of parental alienation.

According to the US National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), nearly 800,000 children are reported missing each year. That is more than 2,000 a day.

Pakistan has acceded to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction which is a multilateral treaty that establishes proceedings for the prompt return of children who were wrongfully removed or kept away from their home country.

Currently, there are 98 contracting states to the Hague Convention.

The Convention will enter into force between the United States andPakistan on Oct 1, and will put in place an internationally recognised legal framework to resolve cases of parental child abduction between the two countries.

July 17: The United Nations designated Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) leader Noor Wali Mehsud as a global terrorist.

July 17: The liaison assistant to the Balochistan chief minister and focal person for the Coronavirus Control Programme in the province, Sardarzada Mir Umair Jan Mohammad Hasni, resigned.

July 17: The Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Supreme Court set aside the appointment of five judges in the region's high court.

July 18: Six days after Pakistan announced the resumption of Afghan exports to India through the Attari-Wagah border to facilitate transit trade, the first consignment of goods crossed over to India.

July 18: Asset details of all the special assistants and advisers to Prime Minister Imran Khan were made public.

July 19: Senior leader in the United Kingdom Aftab Ahmed was appointed Punjab

Thunderstorms and lightning

A thunderstorm is a series of sudden electrical discharges resulting from atmospheric conditions. These discharges result in sudden flashes of light and trembling sound waves, commonly known as thunder and lightning. Both these phenomena are associated with convective clouds and are often accompanied by heavy rain or hail. Thunder is the sound produced by the rapid heating of air by a lightning strike whereas lightning is a huge electrical discharge that flows between clouds; from a cloud to air or from a cloud to the ground. Thunderstorms are created by intense heating of the earth's surface, and are most common in parts of the world where weather is hot and humid. They develop when the atmosphere is unstable – when warm air exists underneath much colder air. The two vital ingredients for a thunderstorm are instability in the atmosphere and moisture. Thunderstorms take place when there is more humid air in the system, which is the case during the heatwaves. They tend to develop later in the afternoon after the progressive heating during the early part of the day.

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Chief Minister Usman Buzdar's focal person for the complaints of overseas Pakistanis.

July 19: Punjab Minister for Wildlife and Fisheries Malik Asad Khokhar resigned.

July 19: Kashmiris on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) and across the world observed the Accession to Pakistan Day.

July 20: The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) blocked Bigo and issued a final warning to Tik Tok to put in place a comprehensive mechanism to control obscenity.

July 20: Pakistan Air Force (PAF)'s indigenous creation JF-17 Thunder fighter aircraft made its maiden appearance at Virutal Royal Air Tattoo Show-2020.

July 20: Former judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan Sardar Mohammad Aslam, who was the first chief justice of Islamabad High Court (IHC), died.

July 21: Sister Ruth Lewis, incharge at the Darul Sukoon organisation in Karachi, passed away. She was 77.

July 22: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) doubled the refinancing limit for a renewable power project to two billion rupees to increase contribution of clean energy to the grid.

July 22: The Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank's Board of Directors approved a loan of $250 million to help Pakistan strengthen its response to the social and economic fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic.

July 22: The NTI (the Nuclear Threat Initiative) Nuclear Security Index 2020 was released according to which Pakistan improved its score by seven points and is the most improved country with weapons-usable nuclear materials.

July 22: Barrister Mirza Shahzad Akbar was promoted to Adviser to the Prime Minister on Accountability and Interior with the status of a federal minister.

July 22: The federal government issued a new notification regarding the constitution of the National Finance Commission (NFC), withdrawing the previous one which allowed Finance Adviser Hafeez Shaikh to chair the commission.

July 22: In his first telephone conversation with his Bangladeshi counterpart Hasina Wajed, PMIK expressed his desire for 'closer and fraternal' relations with Bangladesh. He reiterated the invitation to Prime Minister Wajed to visit Pakistan.

July 22: Pakistan's brilliant scrabble champion Waseem Khatri clinched the online Double-double Scrabble Championship.

July 23: Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Munir Akram, was elected unanimously as the president of the UN Economic and Social Council for a year, ending in July 2021.

About ECOSOC

The 54-member ECOSOC is the third principal organ, along with the General Assembly and Security Council, established in 1945 under the UN Charter to promote international economic cooperation and oversee the work of all international economic organisations.

CPEC and Indian factor

China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an important part of the Chinese Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) — a transcontinental and trans-oceanic initiative. Under the CPEC, the port of Gwadar will connect China with Central Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe through a network of rail, road and motorways. With the emergence of China as a global economic superpower, trade through the Indian Ocean is set to rise significantly in the coming decades, especially through CPEC. China is working day and night to operationalise the BRI, which aims at seeking regional and global connectivity through land and sea. The Indian Ocean has emerged as the centre for the regional trade as around 90,000 vessels in the world's commercial fleet transport 9.84 billion tonnes of cargo through the ocean besides 40 percent of world's oil supply that also passes through the same waters. With 19.9 percent of global trade volume passing through the Indian Ocean, the total trade through the ocean is 70 percent of the world trade in value.

On the other hand, the CPEC route also provides immense opportunities to CARs, a region that emerged on the world map after the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, to expand trade with Pakistan and also go through China for trade expansion. In the context of geo-strategic situation in the region, CPEC offers an alternative solution to link up Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, which directly border China, as well as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, to the route, thus ruling out reliance on the traditional perception that all roads from Pakistan into the Central Asia go through Kabul or Wakhan Strip. Almost all CARs have shown interest in joining the CPEC. With abundance of natural resources such as oil, gas, gold and other metals, CARs have great potential to invest in CPEC-related projects and its industrial zones. Experts hope the recent improvement in bilateral relations with Russia would help and improve the prospects of wider regional connectivity through multilateral tracks. As it is, all the five CARs, besides Afghanistan, are landlocked and don't have access to sea. Thus, they can launch trade and build energy corridor through the CPEC project. The dream of transit trade can be materialised through the Gwadar Port. Tajikistan could even access the Indian Ocean by connecting the China-Pakistan railway, once it is completed.

The CPEC is predicted to bring industrialisation and investment to Pakistan, the carry-over effects of which will obviously benefit the neighbouring Afghanistan also. Kabul is only 1,237 kms away from Gwadar, which offers a commercially and economically beneficial route for Afghanistan with much less logistical expenses. The newly-built roads in Balochistan will enable Afghan businessmen and investors to access the enormous consumer markets in South Asia, thereby increasing Afghanistan's exports and reducing the costs of imports.

Unfortunately, an unprecedented anti-CPEC campaign was unleashed by hostile elements, especially India, at various international fora and organisations with the aim to scuttle the project and deprive Pakistan of its benefits. Efforts were aimed at creating controversies and mistrust of the people in the mega project through various means and exploiting fault-lines in the society. The fact is that all allegations and misconceptions are absurd and have been denied by the Pakistani government again and again. The CPEC is neither against any country nor it has any hidden agenda. It is a manifestation of deeper and credible relations between China and Pakistan for the betterment of the people of the region. The project will open new vistas for prosperity and peace in the region, if capitalised positively. The project does not have military designs; the CPEC is an economic project aimed at linking

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July 24: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) ordered the government to lift the ban on online game PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG).

July 24: PMIK constituted a three-member committee, consisting of Balochistan Chief Minister Jam Kamal Khan Alyani, Federal Minister for Planning and Development Asad Umar and Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance Dr Abdul Hafeez Sheikh, to suggest priority areas for development in Balochistan with special focus on communications, agriculture, energy and other important sectors.

July 25: In its new report, the United Nations claimed that 6,000 to 6,500 terrorists of Pakistani origin are still operating in Afghanistan and use their bases to attack targets inside Pakistan.

It notes that while the TTP continues to be the primary group with a focus on Pakistan, its members are also active in various terrorist outfits.

July 26: The author of some renowned Naats as well as humorous poetry, Professor Inayat Ali Khan Tonki, passed away.

July 26: Pakistan Army troops shot down an Indian spying quadcopter in Pandu Sector along the Line of Control (LoC).

July 27: Pakistan's hockey great and former captain Asad Malik died in a road accident. He was 79.

July 28: Chief Minister KP Mahmood Khan formally inaugurated the Mansehra-Thakot section of the Hazara Expressway.

July 28: PMIK announced that August 9 would be celebrated as Tiger Force Day throughout the country.

July 29: Troubled Pakistan batsman Umar Akmal's three-year ban was cut to half by the independent adjudicator appointed by the Pakistan Cricket Board.

July 29: The National Assembly passed "The Anti-terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2020" and "The United Nations (Security Council) (Amendment) Bill, 2020" with a majority vote.

July 29: Tania Aidrus and Dr Zafar Mirza resigned from their posts as Special Assistants to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Digital Pakistan and National Health, respectively.

July 29: An elderly man Tahir Ahmed Nasim was gunned down during the hearing of a blasphemy case against him at the Peshawar Judicial Complex.

July 29: The Punjab government once again appointed senior lawyer Ahmad Awais as advocate general of Punjab.

July 29: The Senate passed the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to fulfil the international obligations against terror financing.

July 30: Pir Shah Abdul Haq Gilani of Golra Sharif passed away at the age of 94. He was the son of Pir Syed Ghulam Muhiuddin and grandson of Pir Mehr Ali Shah Gilani.

July 30: For the first time in the country's history, child domestic labor was proscribed under Child Employment Act 1991.

July 31: A Good Governance Council was formed on the directive of Chief Minister Punjab Usman Buzdar (CM) under his chairmanship.

July 31: The family of Sabika Sheikh, a high school exchange student from Pakistan who was killed in a May 2018 shooting at Santa Fe High School near Houston, started Sabika for Peace Foundation to honour her memory through providing university scholarships to low-income Pakistani women.

Aug 01: A young graduate of Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Saad Amer, set a new record in Graduate Record Examination (GRE) when he scored 339 out of 340.

Aug 02: A PML-N MNA Syed Iftikharul Hassan passed away at the age of 81.

Aug 03: PMIK and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani discussed the latest stage in the Afghan peace process.

Aug 03: Dr Faisal Sultan, one of Prime Minister Imran Khan's closest confidantes in the health sector, was appointed Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination.

Aug 03: Minister for Communications and Postal Services Murad Saeed unveiled the plaque to rename the Kashmir Highway as 'Srinagar Highway' to express solidarity with people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Aug 03: The IHC suggested that the government offer Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav another opportunity to appoint a lawyer.

Aug 04: On the eve of Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir, the federal cabinet approved a new political map of Pakistan, which includes the IOJ&K and other disputed areas.

Aug 04: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Qamar Javed Bajwa met senior serving and retired military officers to discuss security and other professional matters.

Aug 05: The Executive Committee of National Economic Council (Ecnec) approved upgradation of Pakistan Railways' Mainline-1 (ML-1) at estimated cost of $6.806 billion (equal to Rs11.44 trillion) under the CPEC.

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Shape of our solar system

Using data from a variety of Nasa missions to plot out the shape of the magnetic bubble surround all of the planets, the agency recently revealed the strange shape of our solar system. Traditionally, depictions of that bubble have shown it as something like a comet, with a rounded leading edge and a long trail behind it. But, in fact, it appears to be a much strange shape, like a croissant that has been badly baked or an ear. The magnetic bubble that wraps around all the planets of our solar system is made as material flows out of the Sun in the solar wind. Outside of it is the point known as the interstellar medium, which fills up the gap between our solar system and the other planetary systems that are our neighbours, throughout the universe. It is hard to get a picture of that bubble, known as the heliosphere, from inside. The nearest edge to us is some ten billion miles away, and only two objects made by humanity have been able to get near it, when both the Voyager spacecraft travelled out of our solar system and into interstellar space. But researchers are able to get a picture of the bubble from the inside by looking at particles that fly towards Earth. Those charged particles come to us from distant part of the galaxy as well as within our solar system, and bounce off the bubble and around it, before coming to Earth where they can be measured. A Nasa mission known as the Interstellar Boundary Explorer uses them as something like a radar, watching for how they bounce off the edges to understand where that edge might be. The researchers combined that data with information from Nasa's missions to other planets – such as the Casssini and New Horzions missions that headed further out into our solar system – which gave further measurements of the solar wind. By combining all of that data they were able to build up the deflated croissant view of our solar system.

Aug 05: Pakistan and the people of Kashmir around the world marked the Youm-e-Istehsal over the first anniversary of illegal Indian annexation of Occupied Kashmir.

Aug 05: The Foreign Office appointed veteran diplomat Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri as its new spokesperson.

Aug 05: A local court dismissed a petition of US blogger Cynthia D. Ritchie seeking registration of a rape case against Senator Rehman Malik, after a police report termed the complaint baseless.

Aug 06: COAS General Bajwa had a video conversation with Defence Minister of Japan Kono Taro.

Aug 06: The joint sitting of the parliament passed the Mutual Legal Assistance (Criminal Matters) Bill-2020 with majority.

Aug 06: Col Junaid Alam was unanimously re-elected president of the Pakistan Judo Federation (PJF) for second term (2020-2024).

Aug 06: Pakistan returned $1 billion out of $3 billion which were taken from Saudi Arabia, and this amount was taken from China.

Aug 07: PMIK launched Rs5 trillion Ravi River front Urban Development Project in Lahore.

Aug 07: The federal government appointed Brig (retd) Shujah Hassan as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Pakistan Steel Mills.

Aug 07: The World Bank expressed its inability to take an independent decision on appointment of a neutral expert or court of arbitration for settlement of a long outstanding water dispute between Pakistan and India, saying the two countries will have to bilaterally choose one option.

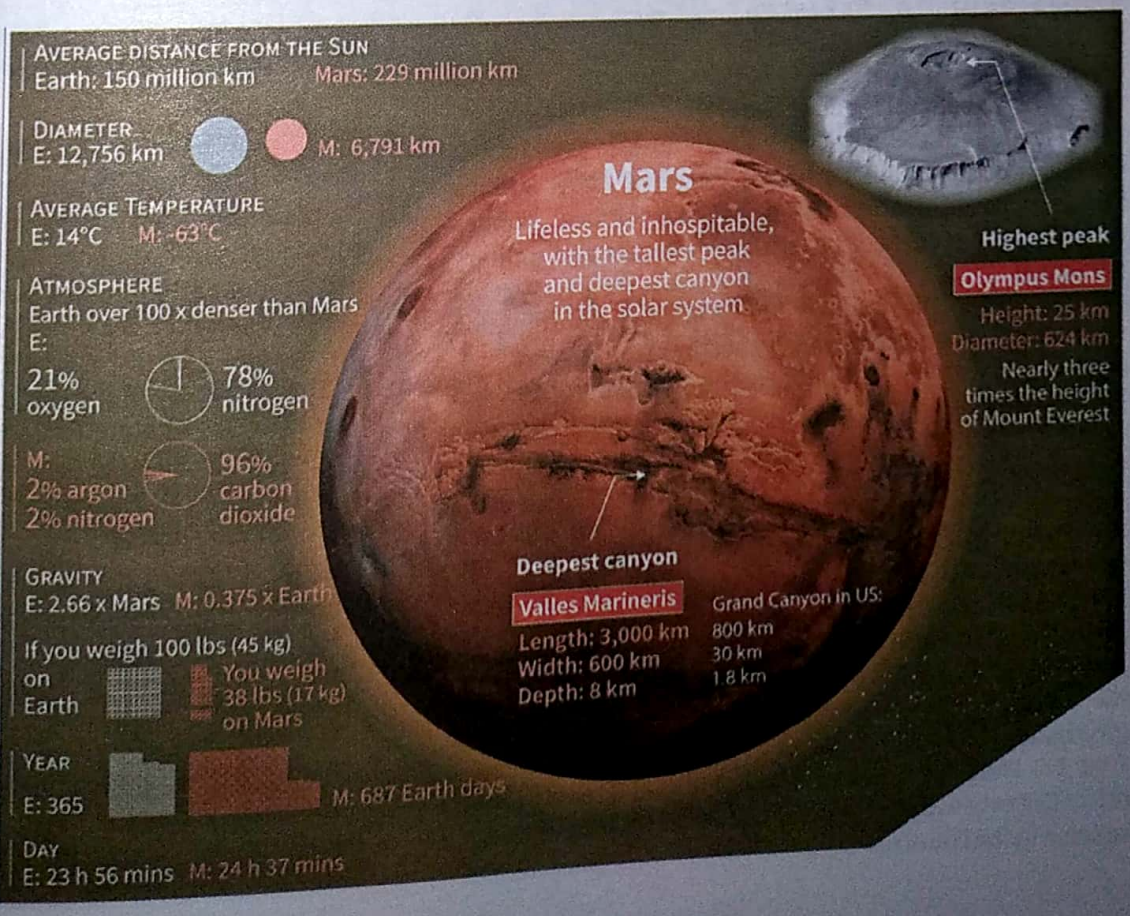
Aug 08: Moody's confirmed Pakistan's B3 local and foreign currency issuer and senior unsecured debt ratings with a stable outlook.

Aug 08: To mark 25th anniversary of the country's only cancer hospital with free treatment facilities to over 75% of its patients, the Pakistan Post Office released a commemorative postage stamp of Rs 20 featuring Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital and Research Centre (SKMCH&RC).

Aug 09: Iqbal Academy Pakistan has re-launched the Presidential Iqbal Award for the year 2019.

Aug 09: The president-elect of the United Nations General Assembly, Volkan Bozkir, reached Islamabad on a two-day visit.

Aug 09: The Punjab government removed Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board Managing Director Manzoor Hussain,



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who recently banned around 100 textbooks, from his post.

Aug 09: PMIK launched the largest tree plantation campaign with the goal to plant 3.5 million saplings across the country in a single day.

Aug 09: British-Pakistani businessman and philanthropist Aamer A. Sarfraz was appointed for lifetime a member of the UK's House of Lords.

Aug 10: PMIK in a phone call to Maldivian President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih emphasised the need for stronger ties between the two countries.

Aug 12: The National Assembly unanimously passed a resolution urging the government that the name of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) should be written as *"Hazrat Muhammad Rasool Allah Khatamun Nabiyin Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam"* in all official and non-official documents. The resolution was moved by Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Ali Muhammad Khan.

Aug 12: The National Assembly recommended that the speech of founder of Pakistan Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah to the Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1947 regarding minorities should be made a part of the syllabus. The resolution was moved by MNA Dr Darshan.

Aug 12: The National Assembly passed five FATF-related bills including the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Bill with majority after reaching the consensus with major opposition parties.

Aug 12: Outgoing Afghan Ambassador to Pakistan Shukrullah Atif Mashal called on General Bajwa.

Aug 12: Pakistan's intelligence agencies identified a major cyber attack by Indian intelligence agencies involving a range of cyber crimes including deceitful fabrication by hacking personal mobiles and technical gadgets of government officials and military personnel.

Aug 12: PMIK constituted the National Coordination Committee for growth of the SMEs sector in the country.

Aug 12: PMIK spoke to Bill Gates, the co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to discuss the latest situation on Covid-19 response and resumption of polio vaccination campaign in Pakistan.

Aug 12: The government formally announced the Alternative and Renewable Energy (ARE) Policy 2020 that offers generous tax facilities to investors and promises induction of power plants on open competitive bidding for lowest tariff and technology transfer.

Aug 13: Pakistan kept up its emerging marketing status in the quarterly index review by Morgan Stanley Capital International (MSCI).

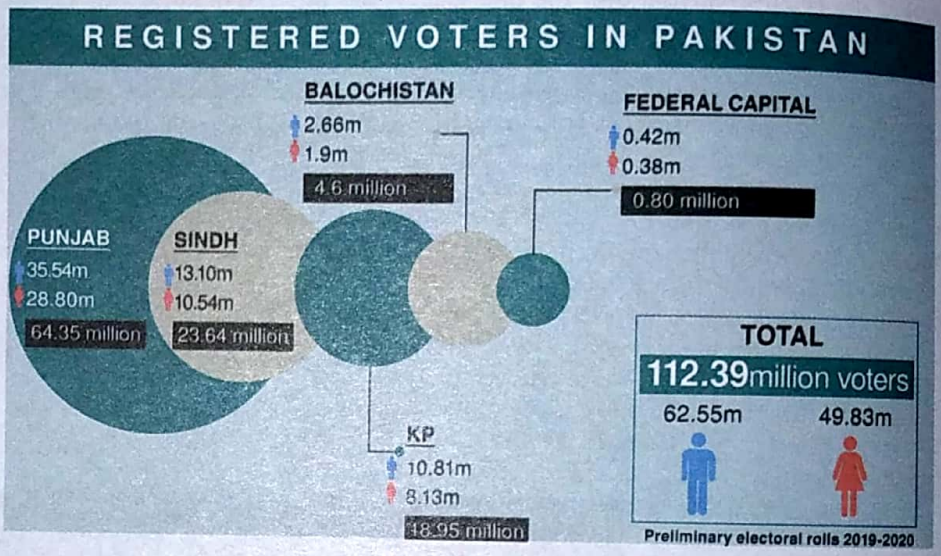
Aug 13: PMIK inaugurated the Bus Rapid Transit Project (BRT) in Peshawar and termed the facility as the best such scheme in the country.

Aug 13: The Punjab cabinet approved amendments to rules of business, 2011, for setting up the South Punjab Secretariat. With these amendments, the secretaries of 16 different provincial departments will perform duties in the southern Punjab secretariat which will be administratively empowered.

Aug 13: The Supreme Court ordered the federal government to recover about Rs400 billion Gas Infrastructure Development Cess (GIDC) dues from consumers in 24 instalments but blocked further collection thereafter.

Aug 14: Punjab Governor Chaudhry Muhammad Sarwar laid the foundation of "Wall of Corona Heroes" at Governor's House in order to pay tribute to the frontline heroes against COVID-19.

Aug 14: Pakistan conferred Nishan-e-Pakistan Award upon Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani on the Independence Day.



Aug 14: A team comprising officers from the Pakistan Army— Brig Rana Arfan Shakeel Ramay, Lt Col Farooq Shahbaz and Ahmed Irfan Aslam—whose efforts made the country proud internationally and saved the nation from a penalty of $1.2 billion was awarded Sitara-i-Imtiaz.

These officers worked hard in gathering information from Swiss, Lebanese, and Dubai banks regarding the corruption of Turkish power rental company Karkey.

The officials also collected documents from Panama and British Virgin Island which proved useful in winning the case against the firm. As a result of their fool-proof investigations, Karkey was forced to withdraw six cases it has filed against Pakistan, thus saving the nation from heavy penalties and international embarrassment.

Aug 15: The CPEC Authority launched an internship programme to develop young leaders with maximum productivity.

Aug 15: The Supreme Court ordered the federal and provincial governments to discontinue the use of words like 'disabled', 'physically handicapped' and 'mentally retarded' in official correspondence as these words offend the dignity of physically-challenged people.

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INTERNATIONAL

July 16: The Islamist group Hamas blocked two Saudi-owned news networks, Al-Arabiya and Al-Hadath, from operating in the Gaza Strip.

July 16: Shamima Begum, the woman who had her UK citizenship revoked after travelling to Syria to join the Islamic State group, was allowed by a court to return home to challenge the decision.

July 16: A European court annulled an order that Apple repay Ireland 13 billion euros ($15 billion) in back taxes.

July 16: Twitter accounts of a number of high-profile users, from Elon Musk to Joe Biden, were hacked by scammers.

July 16: Jordan's top court dissolved the country's branch of the Muslim Brotherhood.

July 16: China became the first major economy to grow since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, recording an unexpectedly strong 3.2% expansion in the latest quarter.

July 17: The World Bank asked G20 countries to provide debt relief to the poorest nations amid the coronavirus pandemic.

July 17: Real Madrid were crowned La Liga champions for the 34th time.

July 17: Captain Tom Moore, a 100-year-old World War II veteran who became a coronavirus lockdown hero by raising nearly 33 million pounds for British health charities, was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II.

July 17: John Lewis, the civil rights warrior died aged 80.

July 18: The leader of the Taliban reshuffled his team of negotiators ahead of peace talks with the Afghan government, adding four close aides to the group.

July 18: Former Australian Test wicket-keeper and ex-International Cricket Council match referee Barry Jarman died at the age of 84.

July 18: After being 'dropped' from a key rail project, India lost an ambitious gas field project in Iran that had been in the pipeline for past 10 years.

July 18: A government-appointed commission promoting the rights of India's religious minorities said police failed to protect the Muslims campaigning against a new citizenship law during violent riots in Delhi this year.

July 18: Pentagon chief Mark Esper effectively banned the display of the Confederate flag at all US military facilities.

July 19: Delivering the annual lecture for the Nelson Mandela Foundation, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the coronavirus pandemic has exposed global inequality and "fractures in fragile skeleton of the societies we have built."

July 19: Formula One champion Lewis Hamilton won the Hungarian Grand Prix for the eighth time to equal Michael Schumacher's single-venue record.

July 19: Film director Rajat Mukherjee, best known for movies such as *'Pyaar Tune Kya Kiya'* and 'Road', died.

July 20: The men's T20 World Cup due to take place in Australia from October was postponed until next year.

July 20: The first Arab space mission to Mars, an unmanned probe dubbed "Hope," blasted off from Japan.

July 20: Mahmoud Mousavi-Majd, an Iranian ho was accused of spying for US and Israeli intelligence was executed.

July 20: Britain suspended its extradition treaty with Hong Kong in protest against new security law in the territory.

July 20: The United States designated Ramzan Kadyrov, head of the Chechen Republic of the Russian Federation, a major violator of human rights.

July 20: Egypt's parliament green-lighted a possible deployment of troops outside its borders, after President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi spoke of potential military operations in neighbouring Libya.

July 21: South Korea's first-ever military communications satellite was successfully launched by SpaceX.

July 21: Sudan's former president Omar al-Bashir, ousted amid a popular pro-democracy uprising last year, went on trial over the military coup that brought him to power more than three decades ago.

July 22: The US offered a $5 million reward for information leading to the arrest of the chief justice of Venezuela's supreme court, who faces US money laundering charges.

July 22: The US ordered China to close its consulate in Houston, accusing it of ramping up spying operations.

July 23: Liverpool lifted the Premier League trophy after a thrilling 5-3 win over Chelsea.

July 23: China launched a rover to Mars. The Chinese mission is named Tianwen-1 ("Questions to Heaven") — a nod to a classical poem that has verses about the cosmos.

July 24: In a Cold War-style standoff, China ordered the US consulate in Chengdu, near Tibet, to shut in retaliation for the closure of its own Houston mission.

July 24: Acting President of Saarc University Dr AVS Ramesh Chandra was removed from his post.

July 24: Turkey's President Tayyip Erdogan joined thousands of worshippers at Hagia Sophia for the first prayers there since he declared the monument a mosque once again.

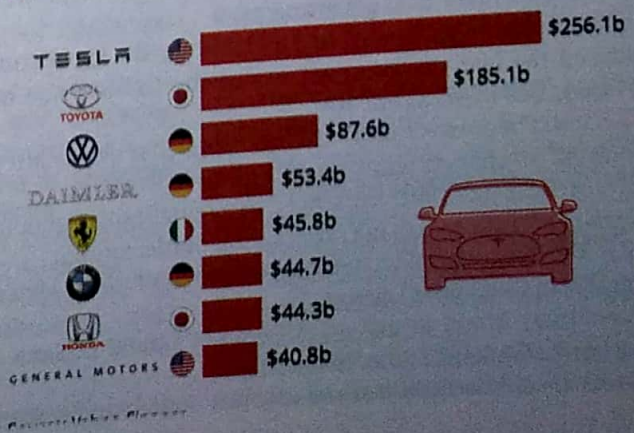
July 24: Philanthropist Bradley Tusk and political strategist Howard Wolfson established a new literary award, the Gotham Literary Prize, with a $50,000 cash prize to honour those best at telling a New York story.

July 24: Goldman Sachs announced to pay $3.9 billion to settle Malaysia's criminal probe over the US investment bank's role in the multibillion-dollar 1MDB scandal.

July 25: India announced to buy Hammer missiles, which has

Tesla Tops List of Most Valuable Carmakers

Market capitalization of publicly traded car manufacturers (as of August 11, 2020)



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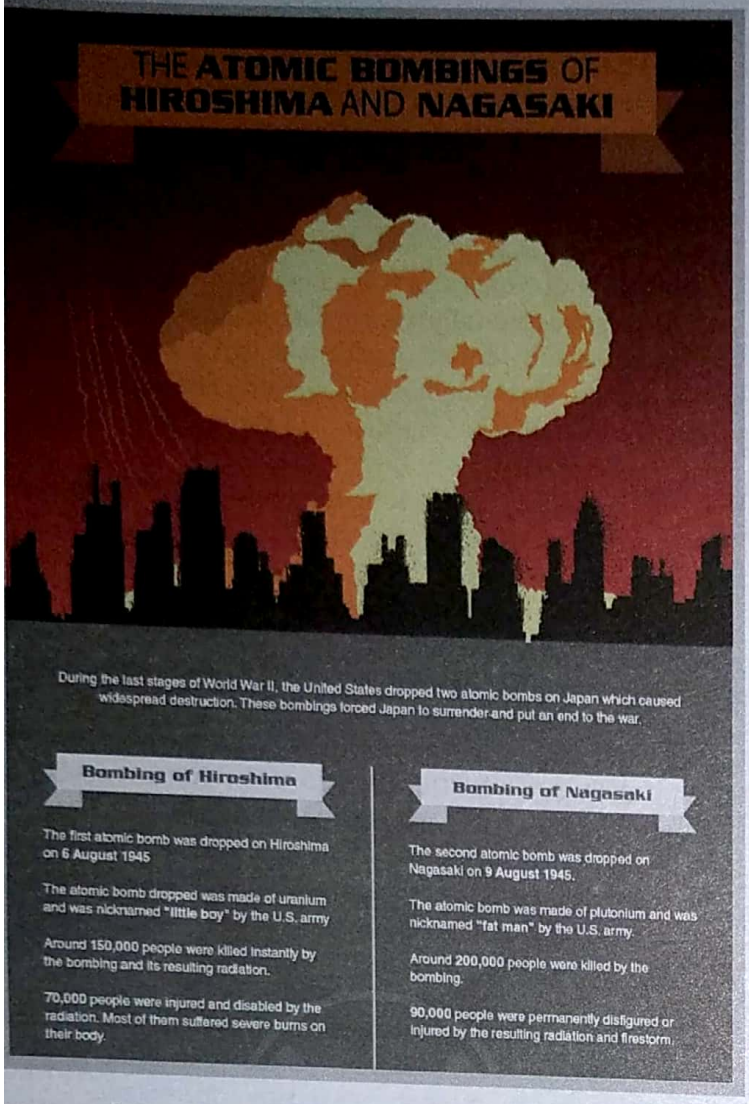
THE ATOMIC BOMBINGS OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI
During the last stages of World War II, the United States dropped two atomic bombs on Japan which caused widespread destruction. These bombings forced Japan to surrender and put an end to the war.
Bombing of Hiroshima
The first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945
The atomic bomb dropped was made of uranium and was nicknamed "little boy" by the U.S. army
Around 150,000 people were killed instantly by the bombing and its resulting radiation.
70,000 people were injured and disabled by the radiation. Most of them suffered severe burns on their body.
Bombing of Nagasaki
The second atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on 9 August 1945.
The atomic bomb was made of plutonium and was nicknamed "fat man" by the U.S. army.
Around 200,000 people were killed by the bombing.
90,000 people were permanently disfigured or injured by the resulting radiation and firestorm.

a range of 60 to 70 km for France's Raphael fighter jets, from France on an emergency basis.

July 25: Norway's Arctic archipelago Svalbard recorded its highest-ever temperature, 21.7 degrees Celsius.

July 25: Italy's Renato Paratore won the British Masters by three strokes.

July 25: US federal immigration officials announced that new foreign students will be barred from entering the United States if they plan to take their classes entirely online this fall.

July 25: Somalia's parliament removed Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire from his post in a vote of no confidence.

July 25: St. Germain beat St. Etienne to win Coupe de France.

July 26: Hans-Jochen Vogel, the former leader of Germany's centre-left Social Democrats who once tried to take on Helmut Kohl for the chancellorship, died at the age of 94

July 26: Tunisia's interior minister Hichem Mechichi was appointed to form the next government.

July 26: "Gone With the Wind" star Olivia de Havilland, considered the last surviving actress of the Golden Age of Hollywood, died at the age of 104.

July 27: India banned 47 more Chinese apps just weeks after blocking video-sharing platform TikTok and 58 others.

July 27: An Egyptian court sentenced five female social media influencers to two years in jail on violating public morals.

July 27: The ICC officially launched the inaugural ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League.

July 28: Stuart Broad joined one of cricket's most exclusive clubs when he took his 500th Test wicket.

The 34-year-old became just the seventh bowler and fourth pacemen to reach the landmark.

July 28: England completed a series-clinching win over the West Indies.

July 28: Former Malaysian leader Najib Razak was sentenced to 12 years in jail on corruption charges linked to the multi-billion-dollar 1MDB scandal.

July 29: Yemeni separatists abandoned their declaration of self-rule in the south and pledged to implement a stalled Saudi-brokered peace deal.

July 29: Mask-clad Muslims began the Haj, circling Islam's holiest site along socially distanced paths in the smallest pilgrimage in modern history.

July 29: A Japanese court for the first time recognised people exposed to radioactive 'black rain' that fell after the 1945 US atomic attack on Hiroshima as atomic bomb survivors, ordering the city and the prefecture to provide the same government medical benefits as given to other survivors.

July 29: Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard launched underground ballistic missiles as part of an exercise involving a mock-up American aircraft carrier in the Strait of Hormuz, highlighting its network of subterranean bases.

July 29: Connie Culp, the first US recipient of a partial face transplant, died at age 57.

July 30: Taiwan's former president Lee Teng-hui, who defied China and earned the nickname "Mr Democracy" for the part he played in the island's transition away from authoritarian rule, died aged 97.

July 30: Nasa's latest Mars rover Perseverance launched on an astrobiology mission to look for signs of ancient microbial life — and to fly a helicopter-drone on another world's first.

July 30: CEOs, Tim Cook of Apple, Jeff Bezos of Amazon, Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook and Sundar Pichai of Google, were grilled at a joint appearance by video before a House of Representatives panel investigating market dominance.

July 31: Hong Kong's democracy supporters were dealt a huge blow as authorities postponed local elections for a year because of the coronavirus.

July 31: China celebrated the completion of its BeiDou navigation satellite system that could rival the US Global

The World's Longest High-Speed Rail Networks

Kilometres of high-speed rail track in operation by country (Feb 2020)

* Finland has no dedicated high-speed rail lines but sections of its rail network are capable of running speeds of 200 km/h (124 mph)

Sources: UIC, The Worldwide Railway Organisation

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Positioning System (GPS) and significantly boost its security and geopolitical clout.

Aug 01: Najy Benhassine became the World Bank's new Country Director for Pakistan. He succeeds Illango Patchamuthu, who completed his term on July 31.

Aug 01: Arsenal sealed a victory over Chelsea in the first cup final to be staged without fans.

Aug 02: World championship leader Lewis Hamilton clinched a record seventh victory in British Grand Prix.

Aug 02: US astronauts Bob Behnken and Doug Hurley, who flew to the International Space Station in SpaceX's new Crew Dragon, splashed down in the Gulf of Mexico.

Aug 03: Lebanese Foreign Minister Nassif Hitti resigned, blaming a lack of political will to enact reforms to halt a financial meltdown.

Aug 03: John Hume, the Nohhern Irish politician who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998 for his pivotal role in ending decades of violence in the British province, died aged 83.

Aug 04: President Donald Trump ordered to have fewer than 5,000 US troops to be in Afghanistan by November.

Aug 04: Two enormous explosions rocked Beirut's port, killing at least 73 people.

Aug 04: Spain's former king Juan Carlos, at the centre of an alleged $100-million corruption scandal, fled to Portugal after a shock announcement he was going into exile.

Aug 04: Every member state has ratified a United Nations convention banning the worst forms of child labour, the UN announced, in a historic first.

Aug 05: Indian-Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K) Lieutenant Governor GC Murmu resigned.

Aug 05: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched construction of a new Hindu temple at a flashpoint religious site that has sparked some of the country's bloodiest sectarian violence.

Aug 05: A special UNSC meetings was convened in New York to discuss deteriorating human rights situation in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJ&K).

Aug 05: Ireland completed a shock seven-wicket win over world champions England in the third ODI. This was Ireland's first ODI win over England in England and their first against a major nation since the 2015 World Cup.

Aug 06: The US Senate voted to bar TikTok from being downloaded onto government employees' telephones.

Aug 06: Film-maker and writer Sadia Dehlvi passed away in New Delhi.

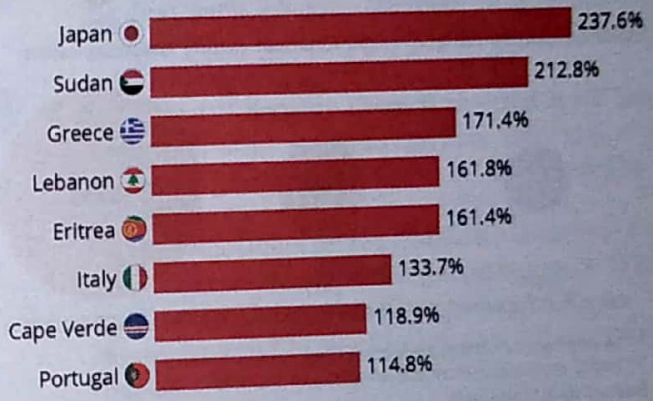
Aug 06: The ICC awarded the hosting rights of the 2021 ICC Men's Twenty20 World Cup to India.

Aug 07: At least 17 people were killed and 15 others were seriously injured when an Indian passenger jet skidded off the runway after landing in heavy rain in Kerala.

Aug 08: England achieved a stunning three-wicket victory

The Countries with the Largest National Debt Burdens

Estimated general government gross debt as a share of GDP in 2020



GK Tidbits

1. Shah Burj Gate is located in: **Lahore Fort**
2. A masterpiece of art Shah Burj Gate was constructed by Mughal Emperor: **Shah Jahan**
3. Pakistan's current Federal Tax Ombudsman is: **Mushtaq Ahmad Sukhera**
4. Panjnad Headworks was completed by Bahawalpur state in: **1932**
5. The animal that resembles the human beings most in physical and mental capabilities is: **Chimpanzee**
6. Colours in fireworks are produced by the salts of: **Strontium and barium**
7. Postaz temperate grassland is in: **Hungary**
8. ORT (Oral Rehydration Therapy) is associated with the treatment of: **Diarrhoea**
9. Muhammad bin Tughluq transferred his capital from Delhi to: **Daulatabad**
10. We cannot see during a fog because of: **Scattering of light**
11. Leukaemia or blood cancer is characterised by abnormal increase of: **White blood cells**
12. The instrument used for recording earthquake waves is: **Seismograph**
13. The Mughal emperor who gave land for the construction of the Golden Temple in Amritsar was: **Akbar**
14. In Oxidation, the atoms of an element lose: **Electrons**
15. Mekong river flows through a large delta in southern Vietnam into: **South China Sea**
16. The plant often referred to as a living fossil is: **Gingko**
17. The country through which both Equator and Tropic of Capricorn pass is: **Brazil**
18. Quit India Movement started from: **Bombay**
19. The physical quantities that have same dimensions are: **Momentum and impulse**
20. International Literacy Day is celebrated annually worldwide on: **8 September**
21. The United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation is observed on: **12 September**
22. The United Nations established the UN Conference on Trade and Development in: **1964**
23. The Karakoram Highway connects: **China and Pakistan**
24. The number of unpaired electrons in carbon atom is: **219**
25. The UN Programme which is not a special agency is: **UNEP**
26. The author of the famous novel 'Gone with the Wind' is: **Margaret Mitchell**
27. The mammal that rolls itself into a ball at the time of danger is: **Hedgehog**
28. The original name of Tansen, the most famous musician at the court of Akbar, was: **Ramtanu Pandey**
29. The number of chambers in the heart of frog is: **13**
30. The Indus Valley Civilization flourished during: **2500-1750 BC**
31. The person who first demonstrated experimentally the existence of electromagnetic waves was: **Hertz**
32. International Human Solidarity Day is observed on: **December 20**
33. The world's longest above-water mountain range is: **The Andes**
34. The river on which Guddu, Sukkur and Kotri barrages are situated is: **The Indus**

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over Pakistan in a thrilling opening match of their three-Test series.

Aug 08: President Trump unveiled sweeping bans on US transactions with owners of WeChat and TikTok.

Aug 08: The United States sanctioned a group of Chinese and Hong Kong officials including the city's leader Carrie Lam.

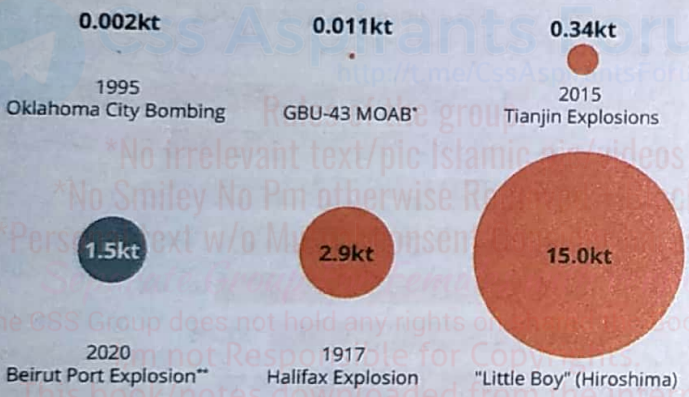
Aug 09: Longtime Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko won presidential election with 79.7 percent of the vote.

Aug 09: US Health Secretary Alex Azar landed in Taiwan for Washington's highest level visit since switching diplomatic recognition to China in 1979.

Aug 09: Afghanistan's "Loya Jirga"—a traditional Afghan meeting of tribal elders and other stakeholders—approved the release of about 400 contentious militant prisoners, removing a

How Powerful Was The Explosion In Beirut?

Estimated kiloton yield of selected explosions/weapons



* Most powerful conventional bomb ever used in combat
** Based on research from the University of Sheffield
Source: Statista Research

Plastic pollution, and how to stem it

The coronavirus pandemic presents an additional challenge, as single-use plastic consumption has increased during the crisis. Here are some important facts on plastic pollution and ways to reduce it, from a recent research published in journal 'Science':

1. An estimated 11 million tonnes of plastic entered the ocean in 2016, adding to about 150 million tonnes already there. That amount could triple if action is not taken to tackle projected growth in plastic production and consumption.
2. In total, more than 1.3 billion tonnes of plastic are expected to be dumped on land or in water bodies, including the ocean, between 2016 and 2040.
3. Without any action, plastic-related planet-heating emissions would double by 2040 and account for 19% of a total annual emissions budget aligned with limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, to avoid catastrophic warming. Today, the plastics value chain contributes 3% of global emissions.
4. Because plastic remains in the ocean for hundreds of years and may never truly bio-degrade, there could be 600 million tonnes in the seas by 2040. This is heavier than more than 3 million blue whales.
5. Current government and industry commitments would cut the amount of plastic flowing into the ocean by only 7% by 2040, while global plastic production is expected to increase by 40% over the next decade.
6. A combination of eight measures, using technology and solutions available today, could cut the volume of plastics going into the ocean by up to 80%. Those include substituting some plastics with alternatives like paper and compostable materials, designing recyclable products and packaging, and collecting more waste in middle- and low-income countries.

GK Tidbits

35. The "Shandur Pass" at the Height of 12,205 feet connects: **Chitral and Gilgit**
36. The number of districts in Azad Kashmir is: **10**
37. Maharaja Ranjeet Singh established the Sikh Empire that lasted from 1799 to: **1849**
38. The British Empire took control and annexed Punjab in: **1849**
39. Urdu was declared national language of Pakistan in: **1954**
40. The scientist who invented both the carburettor and the motorcycle is: **Gottlieb Daimler**
41. The 21-year-old age limit on voting was first introduced in Pakistan in: **1970 elections**
42. Pakistan's last Governor-General was: **Iskander Mirza**
43. Women in Pakistan got the right to vote in: **1947**
44. Dr. Abdus Salam was awarded the Physics Nobel Prize in: **1979**
45. The First Constituent Assembly of Pakistan was dissolved by: **Malik Ghulam Muhammad**
46. The Constituent Assembly of Muhammad Ali Bogra was dissolved on: **24 October 1954**
47. NWFP's name was changed to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in: **2010**
48. Pakistan's flag was designed by: **Ameer-ud-Din Kidwai**
49. Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan presented the national flag in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on: **August 11, 1947**
50. The national flag of Pakistan was adopted on: **11 August 1947**
51. In 1990, the Ministry of Science and Technology organised Pakistan's first scientific expedition to: **Antarctica**
52. Pakistan's first female pilot was: **Shukriya Khanum**
53. Pakistan's first flag was stitched by: **Master Abdul Hakim**
54. Master Abdul Hakim was the tailor of: **Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan**
55. The term "survival of the fittest" was coined by: **Herbert Spencer**
56. The reaction of oxide with carbon at high temperature is called: **Smelting**
57. The highest plateau in the world is: **Pamir plateau**
58. The atmospheric layer that reflects radio waves is called: **Ionosphere**
59. In a battery, chemical energy is converted into: **Electrical energy**
60. Lines on a map which join places having the same rainfall are called: **Isohyets**
61. Davis Cup is associated with: **Tennis**
62. Equatorial forest of the Amazon basin is known as: **Selvas**
63. The method for purification of petroleum is called: **Fractional distillation**
64. The short upper part of the human intestine next to the stomach is: **Duodenum**
65. A lexicographer is a compiler or writer of: **Dictionary**
66. The maximum length of a cricket bat is: **32 inches**
67. The city of Agra was founded in 1504 by:

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crucial hurdle in launching peace talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban.

Aug 09: In the wake of deadly Beirut blast, Lebanon's information minister Manal Abdel Samad resigned.

Aug 09: President Trump signed executive orders partly restoring enhanced unemployment payments to the millions of Americans who lost jobs in the coronavirus pandemic.

Aug 09: Sri Lanka's former president Mahinda Rajapaksa was sworn in as the prime minister for fourth time. He took oath before his younger brother, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

Aug 10: Hong Kong pro-democracy media tycoon Jimmy Lai was arrested on charges including colluding with foreign forces—one of the new national security offences.

Aug 10: Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani issued a decree to release the final batch of prisoners demanded by the Taliban as a condition to move to peace talks.

Aug 10: Lebanon's prime minister Hassan Diab resigned, six days after the massive Beirut blast.

Aug 11: Renowned Indian Urdu poet Rahat Indori, died at 70.

Aug 11: President Vladimir Putin declared Russia the first country to approve a coronavirus vaccine.

Aug 11: White House hopeful Joe Biden named Kamala Harris, a senator from California, as his choice for vice president.

Aug 13: Iranian forces boarded a US tanker in international waters in the Gulf of Oman, using a helicopter and two ships to take over the vessel for several hours.

Aug 13: Israel and the UAE agreed to normalise relations in a landmark US-brokered deal, Abraham Accord, under which Israel would halt further annexation of Palestinian territory.

Aug 13: Lebanon's parliament approved a two-week state of emergency in Beirut, giving the army greater powers to suppress resurgent protests.

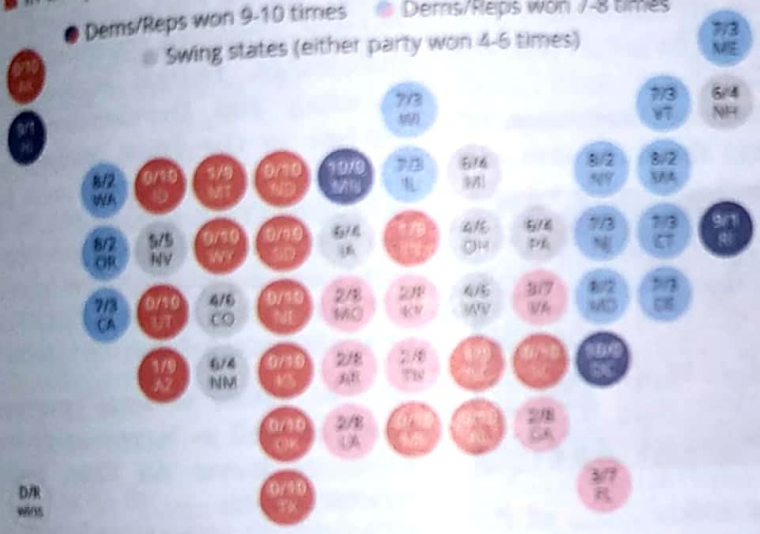
Aug 14: The EU agreed to buy at least 300 million doses of Astra Zeneca's potential Covid-19 vaccine in its first such advance purchase deal, which could weaken plans led by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for a global approach.

Aug 15: UN Security Council rejected a US bid to extend an arms embargo on Iran. Only two of the Council's 15 members voted in favour of the US resolution.

Aug 15: M.S. Dhoni retired from India's national team. The 39-year-old wicketkeeper batsman is India's most successful captain having won the World Cup, the inaugural T20 World Cup and the Champions Trophy.

The U.S. Electoral Map

Number of Democratic/Republican wins in U.S. states in the past 10 presidential elections (1980-2016)



GK Tidbits

Sikandar Lodi

68. The country that has the briefest Constitution in the world is: **USA**
69. The 'Shahnama' was written by: **Firdousi**
70. Nuclear fission is caused by: **Neutron**
71. The first woman to climb Mount Everest was: **Junko Tabei**
72. The Bhakti Movement was first organised by: **Ramananda**
73. Insulin was discovered by: **Frederick G. Banting**
74. The purest form of iron is: **Wrought iron**
75. Florence Nightingale is also known as: **'Lady with Lamp'**
76. The element used as a coolant in nuclear reactors is: **Liquid sodium**
77. Comets revolve around: **Sun**
78. The layer of the earth believed to have the heaviest mineral materials of highest density is: **Central core**
79. Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) consists of mainly: **Methane, butane and propane**
80. The first Europeans who came to India were: **Portuguese**
81. The first man landed on moon in: **1969**
82. The secondary source of light in a fluorescent lamp is: **Mercury vapour**
83. East India Company was brought under the control of the British Crown in: **1773**
84. The element that is obtained from sea weeds is: **Iodine**
85. DNA fingerprint is done using a technique called: **Southern blotting**
86. The ecosystem that covers the largest area of the earth's surface is: **Marine ecosystem**
87. Sound travels faster than air in: **Iron**
88. The first General-Secretary of the Indian National Congress was: **Dadabhai Naoroji**
89. The Home Rule Movement in India was started by: **Annie Besant**
90. The United Nations declared 2013 as the International Year of: **Water Cooperation**
91. The instrument used for measuring the rate of transpiration is: **Potometer**
92. The substance that does not have a melting point is: **Glass**
93. Niagara Falls is known in Canada as: **Horseshoe Falls**
94. The strait that connects Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal is: **Palk Strait**
95. The 'Uruguay Round' negotiations resulted in the establishment of: **WTO**
96. The Durand Line is the border between Pakistan and: **Afghanistan**
97. International Day of Peace is observed on: **21 September**
98. The factory in Bengal which was established by the Portuguese was: **Hooghly**
99. The first metal used by man was: **Copper**
100. The number of water molecules present in Mohr's salt is: **8**

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MCQs / NATIONAL

1. On July 16, _____ Pakistani women, made it to the list of ten finalists for the Women Building Peace Award.
(a) *2* (b) 3
(c) 4 (d) 5

2. The Women Building Peace Award has been launched by _____.
(a) European Union
(b) World Economic Forum
(c) *US Institute of Peace*
(d) Oxfam International

3. On July 16, Pakistan and _____ signed a legal framework to prevent international child abduction.
(a) *USA* (b) Turkey
(c) Switzerland (d) Canada

4. The 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction will enter into force between USA and Pakistan on _____.
(a) Sept. 15 (b) Sept. 20
(c) Sept. 30 (d) *Oct 1*

5. On July 17, the United Nations designated TTP leader _____ as a global terrorist.
(a) Qari Shakeel
(b) *Noor Wali Mehsud*
(c) Khalid Haqqani
(d) Hafiz Gul Bahadur

6. On July 19, a senior PTI UK leader, _____, was appointed Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar's focal person for the complaints of overseas Pakistanis.
(a) Abdul Basit (b) Rana Ejaz
(c) Badar Saleem (d) *Aftab Ahmed*

7. Kashmiris on both sides of the LoC and across the world observed the Accession to Pakistan Day on _____.
(a) July 17 (b) July 18
(c) *July 19* (d) July 20

8. On July 20, the PTA blocked _____ and issued a final warning to Tik Tok.
(a) *Bigo* (b) WeChat
(c) Utalk (d) Skype

9. On July 20, Justice (retd) Sardar Mohammad Aslam, who was the first chief justice of _____ High Court, passed away.
(a) Sindh (b) *Islamabad*
(c) AJK (d) Balochistan

10. According to the NTI Nuclear Security Index 2020, Pakistan has improved its score by _____ points, and is the most improved country with weapons-usable nuclear materials.
(a) 5 (b) 6
(c) *7* (d) 9

11. The Nuclear Security Index is prepared by Washington-based _____ with the Economist Intelligence Unit.
(a) Arms Control Association
(b) Peace Development Fund
(c) *Nuclear Threat Initiative*
(d) Union of Concerned Scientists

12. On July 22, _____ was made Adviser to the Prime Minister on Accountability and Interior.
(a) Usman Saeed Basra
(b) *Mirza Shahzad Akbar*
(c) Asim Saleem Bajwa
(d) Ejaz Hussain Shah

13. National Finance Commission is constituted by the President of

Pakistan under article _____ of the Constitution.
(a) *160* (b) 162
(c) 170 (d) 270A

14. The NFC is chaired by _____.
(a) President (b) Prime Minister
(c) *Finance Minister* (d) Governor SBP

15. The representative of the Government of the Punjab in 10th NFC is _____.
(a) Asad Sayeed (b) *Tariq Bajwa*
(c) Kaiser Bengali (d) Musharraf Rasool

16. On _____, Prime Minister Imran Khan had his first telephone conversation with his Bangladeshi counterpart Hasina Wajed.
(a) July 20 (b) *July 22*
(c) July 23 (d) July 24

17. On July 22, Pakistan's _____ clinched the online Double-double Scrabble Championship.
(a) Imaad Ali (b) *Waseem Khatri*
(c) Moiz Ullah Baig (d) Mirza Taha

18. Pakistan's current Permanent Representative to the United Nations is _____.
(a) Asad Majeed (b) Maleeha Lodhi
(c) Aftab Siddiqui (d) *Munir Akram*

19. On_____, Pakistan was elected unanimously as the president of the UN Economic and Social Council for a year, ending in July 2021.
(a) July 21 (b) July 22
(c) *July 23* (d) July 24

20. On July 24, the _____ High Court ordered the government to lift the ban on online game PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG).
(a) Lahore (b) *Islamabad*
(c) Sindh (d) Peshawar

21. On July 24, PMIK constituted a 3-member committee, consisting of CM Balochistan, Federal Minister for Planning and Development and Adviser to the Prime Minister on _____, to suggest priority areas for development in Balochistan.
(a) Commerce and Investment
(b) *Finance and Revenue*
(c) Parliamentary Affairs
(d) Institutional Reforms

22. The author of some renowned *Naats* as well as humorous poetry, Professor Inayat Ali Khan Tonki, passed away on _____.
(a) July 25 (b) *July 26*
(c) July 27 (d) July 29

23. On July 27, Pakistan's hockey great and former captain _____ died.
(a) Khalid Mahmood (b) Salman Akbar
(c) Abdul Rashid Jr. (d) *Asad Malik*

24. The first captain of Pakistan Hockey team was _____.
(a) Niaz Khan (b) Hamidullah Burki
(c) Munir Dar (d) *I.S. Dara*

25. The Mansehra-Thakot section of the Hazara Expressway was formally inaugurated on _____.
(a) July 27 (b) *July 28*
(c) July 29 (d) July 30

26. On_____, the National Assembly passed "The Anti-terrorism (Amendment) Bill, 2020" and "The United Nations (Security Council) (Amendment) Bill, 2020" with a majority vote.
(a) July 27 (b) July 28
(c) *July 29* (d) July 30

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27. Tania Aidrus and Dr Zafar Mirza resigned from their posts as Special Assistants to Prime Minister on _____.
(a) July 29 (b) July 30
(c) July 29 (d) Aug 01

28. On July 29, the government appointed senior lawyer _____ as advocate general of Punjab.
(a) Amjad Nazeer (b) Ali Zafar
(c) Sana Hamid (d) Ahmad Awais

29. The Employment of Children Act, _____, prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 in unsafe and hazardous environments such as factories, carpet industry and mines.
(a) 1973 (b) 1991
(c) 1996 (d) 2016

30. On Aug 01, Saad Amer, a young graduate of _____, set a new record in Graduate Record Examination (GRE) when he scored 339 out of 340.
(a) LUMS (b) GCU
(c) FC College (d) PU

31. On Aug 03, _____ was appointed Special Assistant to Prime Minister on National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination.
(a) Dr Sania Nishtar
(b) Dr Afrasyab Khan
(c) Dr Faisal Sultan
(d) Dr Zamurrad Elahi

32. On Aug 03, the _____ in Islamabad was named as 'Srinagar Highway' to express solidarity with people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).
(a) Constitution Avenue
(b) Kashmir Highway
(c) Islamabad Expressway
(d) Seventh Avenue

33. Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir was observed on _____.
(a) July 19 (b) Aug 05
(c) Aug 07 (d) Aug 14

34. On _____, the Ecnec approved upgradation of Pakistan Railways' Mainline-1 (ML-1) at estimated cost of $6.806 billion, under the CPEC.
(a) July 28 (b) July 30
(c) Aug 03 (d) Aug 05

35. On Aug 06, Pakistan returned $1 billion out of $3 billion which were taken from _____, and this amount was taken from China.
(a) Saudi Arabia (b) Malaysia
(c) UAE (d) Turkey

36. On Aug 07, the government appointed Brig (retd) Shujah Hassan as _____ of Pakistan Steel Mills.
(a) Chairman (b) COO
(c) CEO (d) DG

37. On Aug 07, the _____ expressed its inability to take an independent decision on appointment of a neutral expert or court of arbitration for settlement of a long outstanding water dispute between Pakistan and India
(a) ICC (b) United Nations
(c) World Bank (d) WTO

38. On Aug 12, the National Assembly unanimously passed a resolution, presented by _____, urging the government that the name of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) should be written as "Hazrat Muhammad Rasool Allah Khatamun Nabiyin Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam" in all official and non-official documents.
(a) Noor-ul-Haq Qadri
(b) Murad Saeed
(c) Fawad Chaudhary
(d) Ali Muhammad Khan

39. On _____, Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurated the Bus Rapid Transit Project in Peshawar.
(a) Aug 13 (b) Aug 14
(c) Aug 151 (d) Aug 16

40. On Aug 14, Pakistan conferred _____ upon Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani.
(a) Nishan-e-Imtiaz
(b) Nishan-e-Quaid-i-Azam
(c) Nishan-e-Shujaat
(d) Nishan-e-Pakistan

INTERNATIONAL

1. On July 16, Hamas blocked two _____-owned news networks, Al-Arabiya and Al-Hadath, from operating in the Gaza Strip.
(a) Saudi (b) Qatar
(c) Egypt (d) UAE

2. On July 16, _____ top court dissolved the country's branch of the Muslim Brotherhood.
(a) Israel's (b) Jordan's
(c) Egypt's (d) Lebanon's

3. John Lewis, renowned US civil rights warrior, died on _____.
(a) July 16 (b) July 17
(c) July 18 (d) July 19

4. The incumbent chief of Pentagon is _____.
(a) Mark Esper (b) Mike Pompeo
(c) Mark A. Milley (d) Alex Azar

5. On July 19, _____ won the Hungarian Grand Prix for the 8th time to equal Michael Schumacher's single-venue record.
(a) Sebastian Vettel (b) Carlos Sainz
(c) Lewis Hamilton (d) Valtteri Bottas

6. The next edition of men's T20 World Cup will take place in _____.
(a) England (b) South Africa
(c) Australia (d) New Zealand

7. On July 20, the first Arab space mission to Mars, an unmanned probe named Al-Aml or _____ blasted off from Japan.
(a) Perseverance (b) Aquarius
(c) Hope (d) None of these

8. On July 20, _____ suspended its extradition treaty with Hong Kong.
(a) Britain (b) USA
(c) Canada (d) Germany

9. On July 21, _____ first-ever military communications satellite was successfully launched by SpaceX.
(a) France's (b) South Korea's
(c) UAE's (d) China's

10. On July 22, the USA offered a $5 million reward for information leading to the arrest of the chief justice of _____ supreme court.
(a) Qatar's (b) Syria's
(c) Venezuela's (d) Sudan's

11. On July 22, the United States ordered China to close its consulate in _____, accusing it of ramping up spying operations.
(a) California (b) Houston
(c) New Jersey (d) New York

12. On July 23, Liverpool lifted the Premier League trophy after a thrilling 5-3 win over _____.
(a) Man. United (b) Man. City
(c) Chelsea (d) Arsenal

13. On July 23, China launched a rover to Mars named _____.
(a) Yinghuo-1 (b) Tianwen-1
(c) Tianlian-1 (d) Tiangong-1

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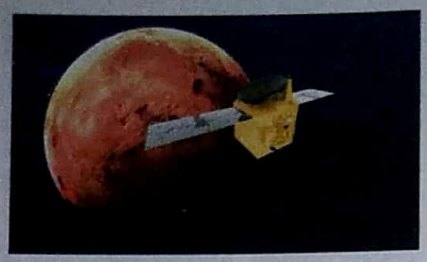

14. On July 24, China ordered the US consulate in _____, near Tibet, to shut in retaliation for the closure of its own Houston mission.
(a) Shanghai (b) *Chengdu*
(c) Shenyang (d) Guangzhou

15. On July 24, _____ removed the Acting President of Saarc University Dr AVS Ramesh Chandra from his post.
(a) Bhutan (b) *India*
(c) Nepal (d) Sri Lanka

16. The first prayers at Hagia Sophia since Turkey declared the monument a mosque once again was held on _____.
(a) *July 24* (b) July 25
(c) July 26 (d) July 28

17. On July 24, Bradley Tusk and Howard Wolfson established a new literary award, the _____ Literary Prize.
(a) *Gotham* (b) New York
(c) NY Story (d) None of these

18. On July 24, Goldman Sachs announced to pay $3.9 billion to settle _____ criminal probe over its role in 1MDB scandal.
(a) Vietnam's (b) *Malaysia's*
(b) Cambodia's (c) Indonesia's

19. On July 25, India announced to buy Hammer missiles from _____ on an emergency basis.
(a) Russia (b) *France*
(c) Germany (d) USA

20. On July 25, _____ Arctic archipelago Svalbard recorded its highest-ever temperature, 21.7 degrees Celsius.
(a) *Norway's* (b) Estonia's
(c) Canada's (d) Iceland's

21. On July 25, _____ parliament removed Prime Minister Hassan Ali Khaire from his post.
(a) Mali's (b) Tunisia's
(c) *Somalia's* (d) Lebanon's

22. On _____, the ICC officially launched the inaugural ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League.
(a) July 25 (b) July 26
(c) *July 27* (d) July 29

23. On July 28, former _____ leader Najib Razak was sentenced to 12 years in jail on corruption charges.
(a) Lebanese (b) Indonesian
(c) Syrian (d) *Malaysian*

24. On July 29, _____ launched underground ballistic missiles.
(a) India (b) China
(c) *Iran* (d) North Korea

25. On July 30, _____ former president Lee Teng-hui, who earned the nickname "Mr Democracy," died.
(a) *Taiwan's* (b) Singapore's
(c) Mongolia's (d) Vietnam's

26. On July 30, Nasa's latest Mars rover _____ launched on an astrobiology mission.
(a) Hope (b) Aquarius
(c) *Perseverance* (d) None of these

27. On Aug 03, John Hume, the Northern Irish politician who won the Nobel Peace Prize in _____, died.
(a) 1996 (b) 1997
(c) *1998* (d) 2000

28. Two enormous explosions rocked Beirut's port on _____.
(a) *Aug 04* (b) Aug 05
(c) Aug 06 (d) Aug 07

29. On Aug 04, _____ former king Juan Carlos went into exile.
(a) Norway's (b) Sweden's
(c) *Spain's* (d) Belgium's

30. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched construction of a new Hindu temple at the Babri Masjid site on _____.
(a) *Aug 05* (b) Aug 06
(c) Aug 07 (d) Aug 08

31. On Aug 06, the _____ voted to bar TikTok from being downloaded onto government employees' telephones.
(a) *US Senate*
(b) UK House of Lords
(c) Russian Doma (d) Japan's Diet

32. On Aug 06, the ICC awarded the hosting rights of the 2021 ICC Men's Twenty20 World Cup to_____.
(a) Australia (b) UAE
(c) *India* (d) Sri Lanka

33. On Aug 09, long-time _____ leader Alexander Lukashenko won presidential election.
(a) Icelandic (b) *Belarusian*
(c) Polish (d) Ukrainian

34. On Aug 09, US _____ Secretary Alex Azar landed in Taiwan for Washington's highest level visit since switching diplomatic recognition to China in 1979.
(a) Treasury (b) *Health*
(c) Energy (d) Defence

35. On Aug 09, _____ former President Mahinda Rajapaksa was sworn in as the prime minister for the fourth time.
(a) Bhutan's (b) Maldives'
(c) *Sri Lanka's* (d) Nepal's

36. Renowned Urdu poet from India Dr Rahat Indori passed away on _____.
(a) Aug 10 (b) *Aug 11*
(c) Aug 12 (d) Aug 14

37. On Aug 11, Joe Biden named Kamala Harris, a black US senator from _____, as his choice for vice president.
(a) Ohio (b) New York
(c) *California* (d) Kentucky

38. On Aug 13, Israel and the UAE agreed to normalise relations in a landmark US-brokered deal named _____.
(a) Peace Accord
(b) Deal of the Century
(c) *Abraham Accord*
(d) None of these

39. On _____, UN Security Council rejected a US bid to extend an arms embargo on Iran.
(a) Aug 12 (b) Aug 13
(c) Aug 14 (d) *Aug 15*

40. The president-elect of the United Nations General Assembly, Volkan Bozkir, is from _____.
(a) *Turkey* (b) Azerbaijan
(c) Norway (d) Greece

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